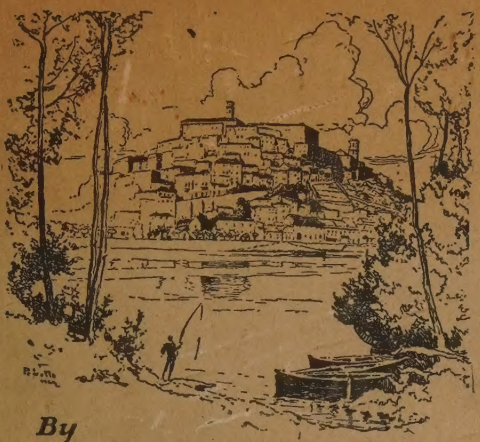
WANDERINGS



By

CLAYTON HAMILTON

DRAWINGS *By* ERNEST C. PEIXOTTO

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COON RAPIDS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL
COON RAPIDS, IOWA

WANDERINGS

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SIENA—THE PIAZZA DEL CAMPO

"The Torre del Mangia, slender and sharp edged, rises sheer to the shaky height of nearly seven hundred feet."—Page 27.

WANDERINGS

BY

CLAYTON HAMILTON

AUTHOR OF "ON THE TRAIL OF STEVENSON"

THE PICTURES FROM DRAWINGS BY

ERNEST C. PEIXOTTO

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK

DOUBLEDAY, PAGE AND COMPANY . . . MCMXXV

COON RAPIDS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL
COON RAPIDS, IOWA

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COUNTRY LIFE PRESS, GARDEN CITY, N. Y.
FIRST EDITION

TO

Gladys Coates Hamilton

MY FELLOW WANDERER
THROUGH LIFE

APOLOGIA

THIS little book was put together to please the Lady of the Dedication—by serving her insistent need of extra closet room.

We had been married for a dozen years; and, while our two little boys had grown appreciably bigger every season, our seven-room apartment in New York had remained no larger than it was in the beginning. So, when the boys began to acquire possessions of their own—which must on no account be thrown away—our quarters had become more and more crowded, until the Lady of the Dedication asked me one day if she might not give my favourite trousers to the ice-man.

I knew that that was only a hint. She had begun to think about my closet down the hall.

Very early in my wanderings I had trained myself to travel light; and once—at twenty-four—I had set out for Constantinople at half a day's notice with nothing but a suit-case. I had learned from Emerson not to anchor myself to an acre, house, and barn; and I had learned from Thoreau not to encumber myself with physical possessions. Excepting books, of course—excepting books—excepting books; and, alas!, the merely necessary books take up a lot of room. But I had always been careful not to acquire anything else. Clothes, for instance;—nobody can wear more than one suit

at a time, and I had never seen any sense in having half a dozen others hanging up on hooks.

But there was my closet down the hall. . . .

I had begun to write for money at the age of fourteen; and I had written very industriously throughout my twenties and my thirties, because I needed money for other people who needed it more than I did. And I had contracted a bad habit in my early youth of buying and saving two copies of each number of each magazine in which I had a contribution. That closet down the hall was filled from floor to ceiling with hundreds and hundreds of old magazines, and served as a sort of mausoleum for my complete and uncollected writings.

So, when we had been married for a dozen years and the Lady of the Dedication mentioned mildly that Donald wanted room to dock his battleship and Gordon wanted room to park his fire-engine, I tried to get her off the subject by suggesting a sudden trip to see the Taj Mahal by moonlight; but I knew what she meant. Her domestic mind was focussed on that closet down the hall.

So, one day, I attacked that closet with a shovel, and dug among the dusty magazines, to see which ones I could cast forth without a heart-pang into the inhospitable world. I was getting along very well, and had dumped down the dumb-waiter several dozens of my critical and learned compositions, when, unexpectedly, I ran across some little travel sketches which I hadn't quite the heart to throw away. They were so young. . . .

I could not feel that, in any real sense, I was myself the author of those sketches. Most of them had been written

many years before by a slender, sentimental youth who used to wander through the world in search of loveliness, and who used to sign his compositions with the name that now is mine; but, try as I would, I could not identify myself with that lad of long ago, who had wandered far away from me, beyond recall, I knew not when nor whither. And as I read over the little sketches that he had contributed to various forgotten magazines—most of which had gone out of existence a dozen years or more ago—I felt that I had been called upon by chance to act either as the literary executor or as the literary executioner of an obscure young writer of the previous generation.

Therefore, I appealed to the Lady of the Dedication.

"Long ago and far away," I said, "there used to be a lad I used to know, who wanted to learn how to write, and walked the midnight streets of many cities to the music of unwritten words that marched forever through his ears: and now and then he would sit down and write a little practice piece, as apprentices to painting make studies in a sketch-book. Here are some of his sketches, in bulky copies of old magazines that long have gathered dust in that closet down the hall. Must I throw them all away?"

And the Lady of the Dedication answered, "If you should reprint the sketches in a little volume, they wouldn't take up nearly so much room; and there is just a chance that somebody might like to read that paragraph you read me about the Roman Temple at Nîmes."

I liked that paragraph myself when I discovered it, because I realized that nowadays I could not write it if I tried. I fondly hope I am a better writer than the author of these

youthful sketches; but, because I know that I could not possibly write any of them at my present age, I have not attempted to improve them by correcting even their most apparent faults. Instead, I have reprinted them unchanged, and have noted down the years in which they were composed. The earliest sketches (dated 1903) were written at the age of twenty-one, and the latest (dated 1922) was written at the age of forty; and that fact will sufficiently account for their obvious differences in literary method. Having passed the age of forty, I hereby make a contribution to the highly heralded literature of the younger generation.

A word now about the pictures:—

One afternoon in September, 1899, when I was seventeen years old, Walter Hampden and I pedalled our bicycles into the ancient town of Warwick and put up at a tavern called the Woolpack. In this tavern we discovered a young American artist and his wife. They were charming people, and I remember that I described the artist to my fellow wanderer as the incarnation of a smile. He didn't tell us what he was doing at the time; but he used to sneak away in the early morning and come back at sundown with a sketch-book tightly closed. One day, however, in the grounds of Warwick Castle, we caught him drawing the great Cæsar Tower; and, having sworn us to secrecy, he confessed to us that he was making pictures for a forthcoming biography of Oliver Cromwell which had not yet been announced. It was then being written by that Lieutenant Colonel of the Rough Riders who had just been elected Governor of New York State,—Theodore Roosevelt.

The name of the young artist was Ernest C. Peixotto; and,

when I saw his drawings, I vowed then and there to make a book some day for him to illustrate. That was more than a quarter of a century ago; but I have kept my vow.

And it is pleasant for me to record that it was solely for the sake of that old friendship, begun at Warwick when we were very young, that Ernest Peixotto stole the time from many enterprises of great pith and moment to embellish with his lovely illustrations this little book of wanderings.

CLAYTON HAMILTON.

NEW YORK CITY, 1925.

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I

RAILWAY JUNCTIONS

[1913]

WANDERINGS

I

RAILWAY JUNCTIONS

[1913]

In his illuminating essay on "The Lantern Bearers," Robert Louis Stevenson complains of the vacuity of that view of life which he finds expressed in the pages of most realistic writers.

> This harping on life's dulness and man's meanness is a loud profession of incompetence; it is one of two things: the cry of the blind eye, *I cannot see*, or the complaint of the dumb tongue, *I cannot utter*.

And then, with a fine flourish, he declares:

> If I had no better hope than to continue to revolve among the dreary and petty businesses, and to be moved by the paltry hopes and fears with which they surround and animate their heroes, I declare I would die now. But there has never an hour of mine gone quite so dully yet; if it were spent waiting at a railway junction, I would have some scattering thoughts, I could count some grains of memory, compared to which the whole of one of these romances seems but dross.

"If it were spent waiting at a railway junction". . . . Here, with his instinct for the perfect phrase, Stevenson has pointed a finger at the one experience which is commonly accepted as the acme of imaginable dulness. This man, who

could be happy at a railway junction, could not have found a prouder way of boasting to posterity that he had never "faltered more or less in his great task of happiness."

It is because railway junctions are the most unpopular places in the world that they have been singled out for praise by one with little taste for popularity. Poor places, lonely and forlorn, cursed by so many, celebrated by so few, —surely they have waited over-long for an apologist. . . . But first of all, in order to be fair, we must consider the customary view of these points of punctuation in the text of travel.

Far up in Vermont, at a point vaguely to the east of Burlington, there is a place called Essex Junction. It consists of a dismal shed of a station, a bewildering wilderness of tracks, and an adjacent cemetery, thickly populated (according to a local legend) with the bodies of people who have died of old age while waiting for their trains. This elegiac locality was visited, many years ago, by the Honourable E. J. Phelps, once Ambassador of the United States to the Court of St. James's. He was allotted several hours for the contemplation of the cemetery; and his consequent meditations moved him to the composition of a poem, in four stanzas, which is a little classic of its kind. Space is lacking for a quotation of more than the initial stanza; but the taste of a poem, as of a pie, may conveniently be judged from a quadrant of the whole.

With saddened face and battered hat
  And eye that told of blank despair,
On wooden bench the traveller sat,
  Cursing the fate that brought him there.

"Nine hours," he cried, "we've lingered here
With thoughts intent on distant homes,
Waiting for that delusive train
That, always coming, never comes:
Till weary, worn,
Distressed, forlorn,
And paralyzed in every function!
I hope in hell
His soul may dwell
Who first invented Essex Junction!"

It was apparently the purpose of the writer to convey the impression that his period of waiting had been passed without pleasure; but yet we may easily confute him with another quotation from "The Lantern Bearers." "One pleasure at least," says Stevenson, "he tasted to the full—his work is there to prove it—the keen pleasure of successful literary composition." Was this honourable author ever moved to such eloquence by an audience with Queen Victoria? Never; so far as we know. Was not Essex Junction, therefore, a more inspiring spot than Buckingham Palace? Undeniably. Then, why complain of Essex Junction?

For, indeed, the pleasure that we take from places is nothing more nor less than the pleasure we put into them. A person predisposed to boredom can be bored in the very nave of Amiens; and a person predisposed to happiness can be happy even in Camden, New Jersey. I know, for I have watched American tourists in Amiens; and once, when I had gone to Camden, to visit Walt Whitman in his granite tomb, I was awakened to a strange exhilaration, and wandered all about that little dust-heap of a city amazing the inhabi-

tants with a happiness that required them to smile. "All architecture," said Whitman, "is what you do to it when you look upon it; . . . all music is what awakes from you when you are reminded by the instruments"; and I must have had this passage singing in my blood when I enjoyed that monstrous court-house dome which stands up like a mushroom in the midst of Camden.

I have never been to Essex Junction; but I should like to go there—just to see (in Whitman's words) what I could do to it. Imagine it upon a windy night of winter, when a hundred discommoded passengers are turned out, grumbling, underneath the stars—coughing invalids, and kicking infants, and indignant citizens, scrambling haphazard among tottering trunks and picking their way from train to train. Imagine their faces, their voices, their gesticulations: here, indeed, you will see more than a theatre-full of characters. Or, if human beings do not interest you, imagine the mysterious gleam of yellow windows veiled behind a drift of intermingled smoke and steam. Listen, also, to the clang of bells, the throb and puff of the engines, and the shrill shriek of their whistles. Or peer into the station shed, made stuffy by the breath of many loiterers; and contrast their death in life with the life in death of those others who loiter through eternity beneath the gravestones of the cemetery. I can imagine being happy with all this (and even writing a paragraph about it afterward); but, above all, I should like to gather those hundred discommoded passengers upon the station platform, and to rehearse and lead them in a solemn chant of the refrain of Phelps's poem. Imagine a hundred voices singing lustily in unison:

"I hope in hell
His soul may dwell
Who first invented Essex Junction,"

under the vast cathedral vaulting of the night, until the adjacent dead should seem to stand up in their graves and join the anthem of anathema. . . . Who is there so bold to tell me that enjoyment is impossible in such a place as this?

There is very little difference between places, after all; the true difference is between the people who regard them. I should rather read a description of Hoboken by Rudyard Kipling than a description of Florence by some New England schoolmarm. To the poet, all places are poetical; to the adventurous, all places are teeming with adventure: and to experience a lack of joy in any place is merely a sign of sluggish blood in the beholder.

So, at least, it seems to me; for not otherwise can I explain the fact that, like my beloved R. L. S., I have always enjoyed waiting at railway junctions. I love not merely the marching phrases, but also the commas and the semicolons of a journey—those mystic moments when "we look before and after" and need not "pine for what is not." I have never done much waiting in America, which is in the main a country of express trains, that hurl their lighted windows through the night like what Mr. Kipling calls "a damned hotel"; but there is scarcely a country of Europe except Russia whose railway junctions are unknown to me. In many of these little nameless places I have experienced memorable hours; and because the less enthusiastic Baedeker has neglected to star and double-star them, I have always

wanted to praise them, in print somewhat larger than his own. Space is lacking in the present essay for a complete guide to all the railway junctions of Europe; but I should like to commemorate a few, in gratitude for what befell me there.

There is a junction in Bavaria whose name I have forgotten; but it is very near to Rothenburg, the most picturesquely mediæval of all German cities. It consists merely of a station and two intersecting tracks. When you enter the station, you observe what seems to be a lunch-counter; but if you step up to it and innocently order food, a buxom girl informs you that no food is ever served there—and then everybody laughs. This pleasant cachinnation attracts your attention to the assembled company. It consists of several peasants, in their native costumes (which any painter would be willing to journey many miles to see), who are enjoying the delicious experience of travel. They are great travellers, these peasants. Once a month they take the train to Rothenburg, and once a month they journey home again, to talk of the experience for thirty days. All of them have heard of Nuremberg (which is actually less than a hundred miles away)—that vast and wonderful metropolis, so far, so very far, beyond the ultimate horizon of their lives. They would like to see it some day—as I should like to see the Taj Mahal—but meanwhile they content themselves with the great adventure of going to Rothenburg,—a city that is really much more interesting, if they could only know. In the very midst of these congregated travellers, I casually set down a suit-case which was plastered over with many labels from many lands; and

THE BRIDGE AT RONDA

"In the wondrous town of Ronda."—Page 10.

this suit-case affected them as I might be affected by a messenger from Mars. They spelled out many unfamiliar languages; and a murmur of amazement swept through the entire company when one of them discovered that that suit-case had been to Morocco. Morocco, they assured me, was a place where black men rode on camels; and I had no heart to tell them that it was a country where white men rode on mules. Then another of these travellers—an old man with a face like one of Albrecht Dürer's drawings—discovered a label that read "Venezia." "Is that," he said, "Venedig?", with a little gasp. "Yes; Venedig," I responded, "where the streets are water." Slowly he removed his hat. "Ach, Venedig!", he sighed; and then he stooped down, and, with the uttermost solemnity, he kissed the label. . . . And then I understood the vast impulsion of that wanderlust which has pushed so many, many Germans southward to overrun that golden city that is wedded to the sea. I have forgotten the name of that junction, as I said before; but I have never been so happy in Munich as in this lonely station where there is no food.

Speaking of food reminds me of Bobadilla, in southern Spain. Bobadilla sounds as if it ought to be the name of a mediæval town, with ghosts of gaunt imaginative knights riding forth to tilt with windmills; but there is no town at all at Bobadilla—merely two railway restaurants set on either side of several intersecting tracks. For some mysterious reason, passengers from the four quarters of the compass—that is to say, from Cordoba, Granada, Algeciras, or Sevilla—are required to alight here, and eat, and change their trains. I remember Bobadilla as the place

where you spend your counterfeit money. Many of the current coins of southern Spain are made of silver; and the rest are made of lead. For leaden five-peseta pieces there is a local name, "Sevillan dollars," which ascribes their coinage to the crafty artisans of the capital of Andalucía. These pieces, which are plentiful, are just as good as silver dollars—when you can persuade any one to take them. The currency of any coinage, except gold, depends entirely upon the faith of those who pass and take it and has no reference to its intrinsic value; and, in southern Spain, the leaden dollars serve as counters for nearly as many commercial transactions as the dollars made of silver. The only difference is that they are commonly accepted only after protest. In every Spanish shop, a slab of marble is built into the counter, and on this slab all proffered coins are slapped before they are accepted by the merchant. The traveller soon learns to fling upon the pavement the coins that are given him in change; and many merry arguments ensue regarding the timbre of their ring. I remember how once, in the wondrous town of Ronda, when a beggar had imposed himself on me as a guide and led me into a church where High Mass was being chanted, I gave him a peseta to get rid of him, and at once he flung it upon the pavement of the church, and chased it, listening, across the nave. Thereafter, he protested loudly that the piece was lead, and disrupted the intoning of the priests. "Very well," said I, "it is, in any case, a gift; if you don't want it, I will take it back": and he accepted it with bows and smiles, and allowed the weary priests to continue their intonings. But Bobadilla is the one place in southern Spain where money is never

jingled upon marble. There is no time between trains to quibble over minor matters; and a "Sevillan dollar" accepted from one passenger is blithely handed to another who is travelling in the opposite direction. I discovered this fact on the occasion of my first visit to this interesting junction; and on subsequent occasions I have eaten my fill at one or another of the railway restaurants and settled the account with all the leaden money garnered up from weeks of travelling. There is surely no dishonesty in observing the custom of a country; and Bobadilla may be treasured by all travellers as a clearing house for counterfeit coins.

Again, in northern France, it was merely by some accident of changing trains that I discovered the lovely little town of Dol. I found myself in Saint Malo, for obvious reasons; and I desired to go to Mont Saint-Michel, for reasons still more obvious—Mother Poulard's omelettes, and architecture, and the incoming of the tide. Between them, the map told me, was situated Dol. I made inquiries of the porter in the Saint Malo hotel. He responded in English—the English of *Ici on parle anglais.* "Dol," said he, "is a dull place." He pronounced "Dol" and "dull" in precisely the same manner, and smiled at his sickly pun. I did not like that smile; and I alighted at the town that he despised. It was a little picture-book of a place, with many toy-like mediæval houses clustered side by side around a market-place where peasants twisted the tails of cows. I strolled to the cathedral—and found myself mysteriously in England. It was a manly Norman edifice, sane and reticent and strong, set in a veritable English green, with little houses round about, reminding one of Salisbury. I entered the cathedral;

and found the nave to be composed in what is called in England the "decorated" style, and the choir to give hints of "perpendicular." And then I remembered, with a start, that the ancestors of all that is most beautiful in England had migrated from Normandy, and that here I was visiting them in their antecedent home. "Saxon and Norman and Dane are we"; and all that was Norman in me reached forth with groping hands to grasp the palms of those old builders who reared this little sacrosanct cathedral in the far-off times when one dominion extended to either side of the English Channel.

It was by a similar accident—desiring to transfer myself from Bourges to Auxerre—that I discovered the wonderful junction town of Nevers, which, despite the guide-books, is more interesting than either of the others. It possesses a Gothic cathedral with an apse at either end, that looks as if two churches had collided and telescoped each other. There is also a Romanesque church at Nevers which is just as simple and as manly as either of the famous abbeys in Caen; and a château with rounded towers, which once belonged to Mazarin. But the most amusing feature of this town is that, though Bourges packs itself to bed at ten o'clock, Nevers sits blithely up till twelve, listening to music in cafés, and watching motion pictures; and this amiable incongruity in a mediæval town makes you bless that complication of the time-table which has forced you, against forethought, to stay there over night.

It is difficult for me to remember a railway junction in which there was nothing to do; but perhaps Pyrgos, in Greece, comes nearest to this description. At this point, you change cars on your way from Patras to Olympia. The

A TOWER AT NEVERS

"The wonderful junction town of Nevers, which, despite the guide-books, is more interesting than either Auxerre or Bourges."—Page 10.

town is made of mud: that is to say, the single-storied houses are built of unbaked clay. There is nothing to see in Pyrgos. But I amused myself by addressing the inhabitants, in the English language, with an eloquent oration that soon gathered them under my control; and thereafter I set a hundred of them at the pleasant task of trying to push the train for Olympia on its way to take me to the Hermes of Praxiteles. I knew no word of their language, nor did they of mine; but they understood that that train should be started, if human force could be sufficient to help the cars upon their way; and finally, when the engine puffed and snorted with a tardily awakened sense of duty, the train was cheered by the entire population as I waved my hand from the rear platform and quoted one of Daniel Webster's perorations.

Is it—I have often wondered—so difficult as people think, to be happy in an hour "spent waiting at a railway junction"? . . . The kingdom of happiness is within us; or else there is no truth in our assumption that the will of man is free: and I am inclined to pity a man who, being happy in Delphi or Amalfi—the loveliest of all the places I have ever seen—cannot also manage to be happy in Pyrgos, or in Essex Junction—and to communicate his happiness to his responsive fellow travellers.

The true enjoyment of travelling is to enjoy travelling; not to relish merely the places you are going to, but to relish also the adventure of the going. The most difficult train journey I remember is the twenty-hour trip from Lisbon to Sevilla, with a change of cars in the ghastly early morning

at the border town of Badajoz and another change at noon at the sunbaked, parched, and God-forsaken town of Merida; and yet I relish as red letters on my personal map of Spain a pleasant quarrel over the price of sandwiches at Badajoz and the way a muleteer of Merida flung a coloured cloak over his shoulder and posed for an unconscious moment like a painting by Zuloaga.

And this philosophy has a deeper application to life at large: for all life may be figured as a journey, and few there are who are natively equipped for the enjoyment of all the waste and waiting places on the way. The minds of most people are so fixed upon the storied capitals that are featured in those works of fiction known as guide-books that they are impeded from enjoying the minor stations on their journey. "Hurry me to Sevilla," cries the traveller—and misses the sight of my muleteer of Merida. In America, our society is crammed with people who fail to enjoy life on five thousand a year because their minds are fixed upon that distant time when they hope to enjoy life on twenty thousand a year. And if ever they attain that twenty thousand they will not enjoy it either; but will merely peer forward to a hypothetical enjoyment at fifty thousand a year. And this is the essence of their tragedy: they have not learned to wait with happiness.

Is there any reason for this inordinate ambition to "get on"? Louis Stevenson was happier, as a small boy with a bull's-eye lantern at his belt, than any king upon his throne. The secret of enjoyment is to learn to look about us, to value what our destiny has given us, to transform it into magic by some contributory gift of poetry or humour,

to consider with contentment the lilies of the field. The zest of life is in the living of it; and "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive."

How often, in the roaring and tumultuary tide of life, we meet a man who sighs, "If only I could have a single day in which there was nothing that I had to do, nothing even that I had to think of, how happy I should be!"; and yet this self-same man, if set down at a railway junction, will at once bestir himself to seek something to think of, something to do, and will spurn the gift of leisure. The incessant hurry of our current life has tragically lured us to forget the art of loitering. We are no longer able—like Wordsworth, on his "old gray stone"—to sit upon a trunk at some railway junction of our lives and listen reverently to the "mighty sum of things forever speaking."

One of the loveliest women I have ever known—the late Alison Cunningham—told me a memorable anecdote of the author of "The Lantern Bearers." When little Louis was about five years old, he did something naughty, and Cummy stood him up in a corner and told him he would have to stay there for ten minutes. Then she left the room. At the end of the allotted period, she returned and said, "Time's up, Master Lou: you may come out now." But the little boy stood motionless in his penitential corner. "That's enough; time's up," repeated Cummy. And then the child mystically raised his hand, and, with a strange light in his eyes, "Hush . . . ," he said, "I'm telling myself a story. . . ."

And, in the "Christian Morals" of Sir Thomas Browne, we may read the following passage:

He who must needs have company, must needs have sometimes bad company. Be able to be alone. Lose not the advantage of solitude, and the society of thyself; nor be only content, but delight to be alone and single with Omnipresency. He who is thus prepared, the day is not uneasy nor the night black unto him. Darkness may bound his eyes, not his imagination. In his bed he may lie, like Pompey and his sons, in all quarters of the earth; may speculate the universe, and enjoy the whole world in the hermitage of himself.

Wordsworth sitting quiescent and receptive in a lake-side landscape, little Louis standing in a corner, Sir Thomas Browne enjoying the whole world in the hermitage of himself—what a rebuke is offered by these images to those who fret and fume away the leisure that is granted them at all the waiting places of their lives! . . . These disgruntled travellers *nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita* miss their privilege and duty of enjoying life merely because they miss the point that life is, in itself, enjoyable. They are so busy reading guide-books to the vague beyond that they shut their minds to all that may be going on about them, or within them, at way-stations. They close their eyes and ears to the immediate. They veto all perception of the here and now. But life itself is always here and now; and, truly to enjoy it, we must learn to look forever with unfaltering eyes into the bright face of immediacy.

And there is another point about railway junctions that reveals an important application to the larger journey of our life. A friend of mine, who is a great lover of painting, had occasion once (and only once) to change trains at Basle, in the course of a journey from Lucerne to Heidelberg. He had to wait two hours at this railway junction; and this

time he pleasantly expended in eating many dishes at a restaurant, and amusing the lax porters by teaching them a method of economizing energy in shifting trunks. It should be noted that this friend of mine was not trying to "kill time"; for, like all genuine humanitarians, he of course regards that tragic process as the least excusable of murders. He was entirely happy for two hours in that railway station. But—having packed his guide-book in a trunk—it was not until he reached Darmstadt, some days later, that he discovered that several of the very greatest works of Holbein are now resident in Basle. The two hours that he had spent playing and eating might have been devoted to an examination of many masterpieces of that art which, more than any other, he had crossed the seas to seek. He has never yet been able to return to Basle; but for a sight of those lost portraits of the most honest and straightforward of all German painters, he would gladly sell his memories of both Lucerne and Heidelberg.

Here we have a record of a great disappointment that was occasioned merely by the common habit of despising railway junctions and presuming them to be inevitably dull. But this same unfortunate presumption, applied to life at large, leads many people to overlook the nearness of some great adventure. Interrogate a thousand men, and you will find that none of them has first set eyes upon his greatest friend in the Mosque of Cordoba or in Trafalgar Square. Every adventure of lasting consequence has confronted all of them, without exception, in some hidden nook or cranny of the world—some place unknown to fame. Anybody is as likely to meet the woman who is destined

to become his wife, at Essex Junction on a wintry night, as in the Parthenon by moonlight in the month of May. The most romantic places in the world are often those that promised, in advance, to be the least romantic.

Since this is so, how can anybody ever dare to shut his eyes to that incalculable imminency of adventure which environs him even when he is merely changing trains on some island-platform of the New York subway? In our daily living we are never safe from destiny; and who can ever know in what vacuous and sedentary period of his experience he may suddenly be called upon to entertain an angel unawares? It is best to be prepared for anything, at any hour of our lives,—even at those moments that must, perforce, be "spent waiting at a railway junction."

II

THE ROAD TO ROME

[1903]

II

THE ROAD TO ROME

[1903]

ALL the way from Naples to Monte Cassino I had chatted merrily in French with three Italian girls, whom I had followed into a second-class compartment. Their father, to whom French was Greek, had sat meekly by and smiled. He had told me in Italian that his daughters were well-educated girls—he had sent them to the convent school. And it was there, doubtless, that they had learned to dischaperon themselves by a clever shift of languages. Anyway, they made the most of their situation—present to their guardian's eyes but absent to his ears.

The girls were pert and pretty, with laughter glowing in their eyes and rippling in the rhythm of their voices. I praised their sunny cheeks, their darkling hair; and they replied in tune. Life was young within us in the golden summer day; flirting was a light melody that set us in a dance. And all the while their father, sitting mutely by, uncognizant, tempted us to daredevil little sallies of the wit that stings and kindles.

At Monte Cassino the girls went bounding out, followed by their father and their baggage. There was "*Au revoir, monsieur*," and a waving of delicate hands; there was "*A rivederla, signorino*," and the sweep of an aged arm; and

then the train went clanking away toward Rome. I leaned back in the shadow of my seat, with remembered laughter ringing in my ears.

Before long I looked out of the window. There were low hills billowing away to a high horizon; there were little hamlets high upon the hilltops, browned by centuries of burning sun; there were slopes of meadow, golden with the late glow of afternoon; there were flocks grazing, and occasional tufts of trees. Slowly the spring song of merriment was whispered away from my memory; slowly I grew adult. At last a stillness stole over the Campagna—a hint of something waning. Evening was coming, and with the evening, Rome.

Seated in the farther corner of the compartment was a man that I had scarcely noticed theretofore. I had had Hamlet's excuse—"Here's metal more attractive." But now when the shadows were lengthening and the growing silence moved to the mood of evening, I began to look with sympathy at this alien of the earlier afternoon. There was a hint of twilight about him, for he was moving to the evening of life. He leaned far back in shadow, silent, grave, benign. At last he seemed aware of me, and turned.

He reminded me at once of pictures of the late King Humbert; there was the same scant gray hair standing tiptoe on his head, the same sweeping gray moustache, the same placid dignity of countenance, the same still look out of deep eyes under shadowy brows.

He addressed me in Italian. "You have been very merry, signorino," he said. His voice was kindly.

"Signor, when one is young——"

"I understand," said he. There was a fading hint of a smile around his eyes, serene and fatherly. I moved nearer to him.

"It was good to listen to laughter once again," he continued, "light laughter, the laughter of the young. It is now three years——" His voice wavered, and he looked away from me.

The west was gathering for the sunset. I looked out over the hills and watched the clouds sweep sunward.

"You are going to Rome," he said at last. "Is it the first time?"

"The first time, signor."

"I envy you," he answered, musingly. "To be young like you, with Rome before you——"

"Rome——"

"Both of us are travellers toward a quest. Yours is beauty and the grandeur of things that were; mine—well, I am old, signorino." He looked upon me tenderly.

"But Rome is for the wise," said I.

"I am going through to Genoa," he answered, gravely.

"That is a long journey, signor."

"Yes; I have come all the way from Brindisi."

"The whole length of Italy!", I exclaimed.

He was silent for a moment, gazing at the sunset. Then he turned and laid his hand upon my knee. "I am going —where my son is," said he. "Now you know my quest."

"It is more beautiful than mine, signor," I answered.

There was a slight twitch of his hand as he drew it away.

"Tell me of your son, signor," said I.

"It is three years now—and Genoa is far away." The shadows were gathering around him. "Do you know," he said, "you remind me of my son. He is tall, like you; and his hair is neither dark nor light; and his eyes"— here he looked deeply into mine—"you have his eyes, signorino."

"He is waiting for you in Genoa?"

"He is waiting. Three years have passed. He is my only son."

There was a sad sweet tenderness in his voice. My heart warmed to him. "I am an only son, too," I answered. "I have a father and a mother far away."

The old man looked out again over the rolling hills. "He has no mother—any more," he said at last.

The glory of golden light that had swept along the west was deepening to palish green. Broad shadows lay upon the hill slopes. There were rolling meadows, calm and cool; there were long lines of poplars, shivering and shimmering; and there were ancient aqueducts, arch after arch, leading onward to the ancient city. Soon the greenish gold of the sunset spread out wider and higher, until the Campagna was canopied with a hollow dome of waning light. Then came "an everlasting wash of air—Rome's ghost since her decease." And there in the railway carriage, rolling on, were the sweet old man and I, each upon his quest.

The train rounded a shoulder of hill. Suddenly my companion rushed to the opposite window; then turned, with his finger on his lips. I followed him. "Behold!", he cried, sweeping me swiftly in front of him. "Rome—the everlasting!"

THE ROAD TO ROME

"Ancient aqueducts, arch after arch, leading onward to the ancient city."—Page 22.

A dome was standing clear above a scattered mass of darkness, far in the valley below. Glory in the sky, shadow on the earth, and a roundness between that might belong to either; this was Rome.

I had come upon my quest; and the old man understood me. Neither of us spoke again until the train went lumbering into the station.

It was eight o'clock. "My train for Genoa does not leave till nine," said my companion. "You must give me the pleasure of dining with me."

He took my arm and led me to the station restaurant, where he ordered a tempting dinner of many courses. Throughout the meal he was gravely silent, watching me. At last I filled my glass with golden Orvieto and raised it high between us. "I drink to your son, signor," said I.

He did not speak; he did not raise his glass; only he looked upon me, till the tears came to his eyes.

When we had finished dinner, he called a couple of *facchini* and paid them to take my baggage into the street. We strolled out with his hand upon my shoulder.

"Where are you going, signorino?", he asked.

I told him the name of my *pensione*.

The old man called a cab, gave the driver my address, and paid the fare in advance. He saw that my baggage was conveniently arranged. Then he said, "It is good-bye now, signorino. I shall never see you any more."

I held out both my hands. "You have been very kind to me," said I.

He took my hands tenderly in his. "Let me look into

your eyes again," he said, as he drew me close to him. "You are very like him, signorino—and—you see"— here his voice faltered—"I did not tell you all. It is to the Campo Santo I am going—there in Genoa. He died three years ago."

III

THE QUEEN OF THE SQUARE

[1903]

III

THE QUEEN OF THE SQUARE

[1903]

It was my custom in Siena to stroll down to the Piazza del Campo in the evening to smoke a pipe of peace and watch the tower of the Duomo grow tall against the sunset sky. After studying pictures all the morning and architectural details throughout the afternoon, I found it very restful to take the air in a public place and feel myself once more in the midst of the world of men.

This Piazza del Campo is one of the most interesting city squares in Italy. It was mentioned by Dante in the eleventh Purgatory, and has ever since been lauded by lovers of the quaint. It is semicircular in form, with a depression in the centre. The southern side is bounded by the Palazzo Pubblico, a huge brick edifice with graceful Gothic windows, beside which the Torre del Mangia, slender and sharp-edged, rises sheer to the shaky height of nearly seven hundred feet. The crescent boundary of the remainder of the square is also edged with ancient palaces; and in the midst is a fine fountain by Jacopo della Quercia, made musical throughout the day by the voices of children playing. It is a goodly place to while away an hour. The Sienese are kindly folk and chat pleasantly with you as they go about their business; and when no one in particular happens to claim your at-

tention, you can look from one to another of the ancient Gothic houses, until you fancy them filled with the lords and ladies of an elder day, and your mind muses of far-off things and battles long ago.

The particular evening of which I wish to speak was my last of many in Siena, for I was going to leave the city on the morrow. It was, therefore, with some sense of sadness that I wandered to the square, just at that hour—as Dante says—when from afar is heard the vesper bell that seems to weep because the day must die. I noticed an old packing box backed against the wall of a wine shop at the southeast corner of the square, and on this I seated myself cross-legged, puffing at my pipe and thinking of many things. Some children were plashing their hands in the marble fountain, and many people wandered to and fro; but I noticed no one especially until a woman drew near and eyed me curiously. I supposed at first that she was wondering at my pipe, for the Sienese have not yet acquired the homely habit of smoking pipes in public; but at second thought I feared that the packing box might be hers and I was trespassing on borrowed property. I arose hastily; but, "Keep your seat, signorino!", said she, "there is room enough for both of us." And she sat down beside me without more ado.

She was a queer-looking woman, rather short, rather round, rather sluttish in appearance—forty-five at least, but looking old for her age—dustily dressed and tanned by sun and wind. Her hair was coarse and careless, and her hands were hard; but there was a rich good humour in her chubby cheeks, a glow in her dark eyes, and a memory in her voice. The box was narrow, and we sat very close to each other.

She looked me over carefully. "You are a stranger," said she.

"Yes."

"You come from Lombardia," she added.

"No; there you are wrong. What made you think that?"

"Your hair is fair; and your speech—you haven't the accent of Siena. There was a man from the north who talked like you. You must be from Milano."

"No, from farther away than that," said I.

"From France, perhaps."

"No."

"From England?"

"No. I am an American," I explained.

"Then you are rich!", she cried.

But I could only laugh at that. "No," said I, "you are wrong again."

She smiled slyly at this and nudged me in the ribs. She felt fondly toward me, as if she had detected me in a cheat. "Will you have some snuff?", she asked. And from somewhere within the folds of her shabby skirt she drew forth a tarnished box.

"*Grazie tanto*, but I am smoking," said I.

So she sniffed some snuff up her own nostrils and shoved the box away.

"Everybody is rich in America," she said, decisively. "There is the husband of Emilia. He ran away from her to go to Nuova York; and now, they say, he is making fifty *lire* every week."

Ten dollars a week did seem a fabulous income; but I still maintained that I was poor.

"There goes Emilia now," she said, suddenly; and then she called to her.

A motherly woman approached with a baby in her arms. She had black hair and eyes, and wore red around her neck; her skirt was blue. She was of the kind that have been beautiful. "Behold, Madonna!", I was fain to say. Sodoma should have seen her.

"Here is a signorino from America, Emilia," called my companion.

"I come from Nuova York," I added.

"Have you ever seen Giovanni Rossi in Nuova York?", Emilia asked. At the first name, her baby raised his head. "Be still, Giannino," she said. Her voice was gentle.

"No, signora," I answered. "You must know that Nuova York is a vast city. It is a hundred times as large as Siena. I have never met him."

"Giuseppe saw him once; but that was a year ago. He was getting rich then. Giuseppe did not get rich. Giuseppe came home." Her voice was very gentle.

Emilia walked away with Giannino in her arms.

"She has to work very hard," said my companion. She took another pinch of snuff; and then we talked of something else.

"Why are you travelling, signorino?", she asked.

"For pleasure," I answered. "For the pleasure of looking at churches like the Duomo yonder and of talking with friendly people like yourself." Out popped the snuff-box again; but, "I am still smoking," said I.

"It must be beautiful to travel for pleasure. I wish I were young like you—young and rich. I should go to

Firenze to see the Duomo there. It has a vast dome, they say, and a splendid campanile. I have always wanted to see Firenze. I was young once, but I was never rich."

I looked at her wind-worn cheeks. She had been young once. "But on the whole I like your Duomo better than the other," I said, to give her heart.

Her cheeks flushed and her eyes fired with the old pride of Siena that pulsed in the blood of her gallant lords when, in mediæval days, they rode forth with flaunting banners to battle with the Florentines among the Tuscan hills.

"Anselmo!", she called to a man who was loitering near. (She seemed to know everyone in the square.) "Here is a signorino from America who likes our Duomo better than the great one in Firenze! . . . And see!", she continued, sweeping her arm toward the sunset, "is not our campanile beautiful?"

Strong and straight it stood, silhouetted darkly against the saffron sky. The evening star hung poised above it. Anselmo grunted; he was dull and brusque. But the woman sat and gazed. "I like the star," she said. Then she added, musing, "I was christened Stella. . . . But I am never called that any more."

Old memories awoke within her. She laid her hand upon my arm. "Were you ever baptized?", she asked.

I answered, "No."

"Then you are not a Catholic?"

"No."

"A Protestant?"

"No."

"What are you then—an Israelite?"

I tried to explain. "I belong to no sect," I said, "and profess no creed."

At this she grabbed my hand. "You are a free-thinker!", she cried. "There are two of us."

"But you said you had been baptized——"

"That was when I was a child and did not know. But I am a woman now, and wise. And I am free—free as the air!" She looked full into my eyes. "I like you, signorino," she said.

"And I like you," said I.

She took another pinch of snuff. Then, "What is your profession?", she asked.

"I am a poet," said I.

Her eyes shone wide. "A poet!" . . . and again she seized my arm. "He is a poet, Anselmo!", she called. But Anselmo merely grunted.

"Then you know *our* poets, perhaps," she continued. "Have you ever read our Dante?"

"Yes," said I; and I began to recite the familiar verses about Francesca da Rimini. I had come to "the desired smile being kissed by such a lover," when the woman broke in and finished the canto without faltering. I looked at her in astonishment. "I learned it when I was very young," she explained, "and I have not forgotten. . . . '*Il disiato riso*' . . . Ah, what a smile was that!" She sighed; and then she said, "It must be beautiful to be a poet. I have often wished that I were one."

"Perhaps you are," said I. But she could not understand.

Then we chatted of many things—of the children play-

ing, of the palaces about us, of the moon above the Mangia, and of my home far away beyond the seas. We soon learned that we had a community of tastes; and we grew near to each other as we talked. Things inessential were sloughed away. She forgot that I was young and came from far; and I that she was dusty and took snuff.

And while we talked, I learned her occupation. It was her custom to sit in the corner of the square and sell matches to the passers-by. Everybody seemed to know her; and while I was sitting beside her, she made sales to many customers. To everyone she introduced me as a signorino from America who was rich, and travelling for pleasure, and a poet.

One workman who met me was a courtly fellow. "And do you know with whom you are sitting?", he asked, when he had heard my titles. "She is called *La Regina della Piazza*—The Queen of the Square."

At this I rose and bowed obeisance to my sovereign. "I am very proud," said I, "to have shared your throne."

It had grown dark by this time, and I felt that I must go. "But you will come to-morrow evening," urged the queen.

"I am sorry," said I, "but I am going to leave for San Gimignano very early in the morning."

Her face fell at this. "But sha'n't I ever see you again?", she pleaded.

"I hope so," I said, sincerely. "I know that I shall not forget you; and when next I come to Siena, though it be many years from now——"

"You will find your place waiting for you on the throne."

And when I arose to go, she placed both her hands upon my shoulders, and looked up into my eyes. "How tall you are," she said. A motherly expression came into her face, and she grew beautiful as I looked down upon her.

I remember her very words. "*Bello giovanotto,*" she said, "*lei mi piace molto*—beautiful young man, you please me well."

I took her dirty hands in mine. "You please me too, my queen."

Then I wandered home beneath the moon, the richer for a memory.

Next morning I was up with the sun, and driving over the hills to San Gimignano delle Belle Torre. All Tuscany was smiling, and happiness breathed in the morning breeze. Yet, when the walls of Siena were at last hidden from my sight, I felt as Dante says that sailors feel—"*lo di c'han detto a'dolci amici addio*"—the day when they have said farewell to their sweet friends.

IV

GIUSEPPE BACCI OF SAN GIMIGNANO

[1903]

IV

GIUSEPPE BACCI OF SAN GIMIGNANO

[1903]

THERE is a towered town high in the hills of Tuscany that is sweetly named San Gimignano delle Belle Torre. You must not neglect to go there when next you are in Florence or Siena. If you go within a year or two—before he has grown up and gone away—you will meet Giuseppe Bacci; and, in that case, I wish that you would tell him that I have not forgotten him.

I left Siena at daybreak, in order to drive through the undulous valleys before the sun had kissed away the coolness of the morning. My driver was one of those calm, prosaic persons that it is comfortable to have about when things are wonderful; and when we rounded a shoulder of hill and came into sight of the town of towers, he merely grunted a guttural "*Ecco!*" and whipped his horse into a curious humping of the haunches. Thus we see-sawed up the road, while I sat back and watched the huddle of sunburned buildings grow dominant with their growing nearness.

The town seemed a part of the hill that it crowned, rock-girt with ancient battlemented walls. It had fallen into long and aged decay. The fifty towers that were piled up by warring families in the days of Guelf and Ghibelline

had crumbled to a scant thirteen; and the pride that made San Gimignano overweening in the centuries that were had blown away like dust upon the wind. Yet the town was merely fallen, and not, like many others, despoiled by change. The destructive flood of renovation had swept along the valley with the railroad from Empoli to Siena; but San Gimignano had stood apart upon its hill eight miles away, and was thus left islanded in age.

It means much to come to a city where not a building has been raised for centuries. You travel out of yourself not only in space but also in time. You forget that there are things in the world that are named with hybrid compounds from the Greek; and the hurly-burly of modernity in your inward ears is exchanged for a remembered rumour of manlier contentions.

I was meditating in this mediæval manner, and was just on the point of imagining myself to be my own ancestor, when Giuseppe Bacci came running down the road and made me modern once again. He was a healthy boy of seventeen or thereabouts, with legs that were beginning to be long. The breeze blew through his hair as he ran toward me, waving his cap in his hand; and when he drew nearer, I noticed that he had eyes and a smile, and liked him for them both. Of course, I beckoned to him.

The horse never paused in his singular headlong heave; but Giuseppe scrambled lithely into the back of the carriage. "You like the drive?", I asked him, in Italian.

"*Pas ça, m'sieu'*," he answered, in the strangest of Italianated French, "*ma j'veux vous faire la guide—far' la guida—comprenez——?*"

SAN GIMIGNANO DELLE BELLE TORRE

"There is a towered town high in the hills of Tuscany that is sweetly named San Gimignano delle Belle Torre."—Page 37.

"Speak to me in your own language and I shall understand you better," I replied in French. If I had known Giuseppe then as I learned to know him later on, I would not have made this answer for the world.

"Very well," he said, in Italian. "But you must speak to me in French."

"Why?"

"Because I want to learn to speak it better. And it is so seldom that a Frenchman comes here, you know."

I am sure that I must have a composite countenance; for at various times I have been suspected of coming from the four corners of the earth. In Verona I was taken for a German, in Siena for a Lombardian, and a Roman sculptor took me for a Pole. So, in the present case, I accepted my denationalization without a qualm; and thereafter we talked bi-lingually—Giuseppe in Italian, I in French.

He repeated his request to be my guide. Now, I have always maintained that in travelling—as in religion—every man should be his own guide. As a rule, I have no use for professional intruders; they grate upon your nerves, like Grand Hotels and first-class railway carriages: they are nearly as bothersome as the ponderous remarks that Baedeker quotes from somebody or other concerning your favourite paintings. But there are times when the best of principles must be foregone. Giuseppe had eyes; and by this time I had noticed that he had a voice. Therefore I surrendered.

"Take me wherever you will," said I; and Giuseppe smiled back happily.

He took me first to the Leone Bianco, a little tavern

just within the city gate. I must tell you that there are two taverns in San Gimignano, that divide between them the allegiance of travellers. Some visitors prefer the Albergo Centrale in the middle of the town; but I can assure you that the Leone is the better of the two. It is a toss-up between them in such mundane matters as beds and provisions; but the Leone happens to enshrine the prettiest serving-maid in Tuscany. And it means something, after a long drive with a heaving horse, to sit down to breakfast in a quiet little dining room, lighted by the loveliest of revolving satellites. I hope that you will see her when you go there; but perhaps by this time someone has stolen her away.

Giuseppe sat upon the door-step while I rested musing over my coffee and rolls. I almost stumbled over him when I turned again sunward. "*Eh bien, m'sieu'*," said he—forgetting our truce of languages.

I answered in a word—or rather, two—"Benozzo Gozzoli."

His eyes lighted. "Ah, in the choir of Sant' Agostino! You know, then——?", he answered.

"Why do you suppose I have bothered to come here?", I asked.

"So many people do not know—until I show them," Giuseppe murmured. "Yet the frescoes are very beautiful. It is strange they should not know——"

"I will follow you," said I.

He led the way to a dusty little church that looked no more inviting, on the outside, than Portia's leaden casket in the play. But a picture lay within it; or, rather, many

pictures. Giuseppe halloed under the windows of a slump-roofed crumbling house; and the sacristan, quick-eared, came forth energizing, with a great bunch of keys clanking in his hand. I paid respects to him—and money also.

A key that looked like the hand of the Ancient Mariner admitted us to the sanctuary. The church was dingy and dark. The sacristan let in the sunlight, and I drifted to the choir, with Giuseppe following. I took off my coat and prepared to stay; but at this the sacristan grew tremulous.

"I shall have to lock the church," he said, "in a little while. How long?"

"Two or three hours," I answered simply.

"Ah, signor!"—and the keys jangled as he threw up his hands—"I have my work to do!"

"Must the church be locked?", I asked.

"Oh, yes, signor."

"Then lock it now. I don't mind. In fact, I'd rather like to be alone—with him, you know—Benozzo."

"The frescoes are very beautiful," said the sacristan, in the dull voice of one who does not understand.

"Come back in two hours and unlock me," I answered. And the sacristan, money-scenting, moved to go.

"Well, Giuseppe——?" I turned to the boy, questioning.

"I will stay with you, signor," he answered; and his was the voice of one who understands.

The door creaked to, rustily; the lock shut its teeth with a click; and the boy and I were left imprisoned with the painter who had been.

All around the choir Benozzo Gozzoli had told the story of Sant' Agostino,—how first he was a lovely youth, unmindful;

and how afterward, when he came to know, he fared forth upon a pilgrimage through the world, and met all sorts of people and did them good by being with them. It was a simple story that Benozzo told—just such a one as his greater master, Fra Angelico, used to tell himself when he walked dreaming through the cloisters of San Marco, there in Florence. Only, Angelico would have painted it heaven-wise, because he dwelt always in the pure regions of the air; while Benozzo was more of the earth earthy, and cared about shining panoplies and vaunting cloaks, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious life. He was more human than his singing angel of a master—more like English Chaucer; and yet a spirit still, and bright with something of an angel light.

I like to look at people who are looking at pictures; it is much the same as listening to a poet who is reading. It was beautiful to see Giuseppe see. He was one of those few who keep wisely silent. Only when the sacristan released us, undesired, the boy said for the second time that morning, "So many people do not know—until I show them." That was all that happened during those hours in the choir —all that happened outwardly, I mean.

We spent the early afternoon together, wandering through undulating streets, grass-grown, sun-browned, silent in decadence. Then we made a circuit of the mediæval walls, pausing at outlying towers to look back over the huddled housetops of the town, and dipped down at last to a hollow in the hillside where clear water puddled calmly. Here half a dozen women, brawny-armed and dusty-haired, were wringing out and pummelling their weekly

STREET SCENE—SAN GIMIGNANO

"Wandering through undulating streets, grass-grown, sun-browned, silent in decadence."—Page 42.

wash of bright-coloured indecipherable clothes. Later still we reëntered the town and zigzagged up to what was once a fortress, commanding the highest point of the hill. Here we threw our legs over the crumbling parapet, and looked far out over the falling valleys of Tuscany,—far away to the village of Certaldo, where Boccaccio was born. There, when the slant sunlight was becoming almost level, Giuseppe and I had our first real talk about ourselves and the large things that we were going to do in the world. And these, I think, are the only subjects worth talking about, seriously, between two people who are young.

I asked him a leading question: "Have you always lived here in San Gimignano?"

"Always," he said. "Only, I went to Siena once—two years ago. It is far away from here. Did you come from Siena?"

"Yes."

"It is a great city, isn't it? That is where I learned about the world. There is much to see there; for the city is so wonderfully large——"

Siena is a score of miles away. It contains twenty thousand inhabitants.

"Have you ever been to Florence?"

His eyes grew large. "Not yet; but I am going some time. They say that Florence is larger still; and there are churches there, and pictures. Only, it is very far away."

I agreed mutely. The distance, I think, is nearly forty miles. "Shall you always be a guide?", I asked.

"Not always. I am a guide now in the vacations, to make money. Then I go to school. There I learn French,

to be a better guide. But it is hard—very hard. That is why I want you to talk to me in French. Perhaps I shall learn English later on. They say that that is harder still. Can you speak English?"

"Fairly well," I answered. "I have heard it spoken much."

"Talk to me in English to-night," he said, "will you?"

"Yes," I answered, in French. "But what are you going to do when you have learned?"

"I shall go to Siena—or to Florence, maybe. There I shall be a guide. I shall make money for a while, and save it. Then I shall work in a great hotel. I shall stand at the door and explain things to people, in French and English. Again I shall save my money. Then I shall start a hotel of my own, in Siena, or in Florence, maybe."

"Florence would be better," said I. "And some day, Giuseppe, when I am old, I shall come back again to Italy and stay at your hotel in Florence."

His feet dangled loosely, kicking the wall. "My hotel ——," he murmured, musing; "that will be many years from now."

He looked up at me after a moment. "You will help me—won't you?", he asked—"about the languages, I mean. It is so hard to learn."

"I will help you, Giuseppe," said I.

So that evening, after dinner, I met the boy beneath the shadow of the gate of San Giovanni. And we sat together on the city wall until the air fell dark and the sounds of evening were stilled into the musing silence of the night.

"You must help me now," he said. "I will say things

in Italian. You must say them then in French and in English. I will repeat them after you; and you must correct me."

"All right. Let us go ahead," said I.

He looked around the landscape, until his eyes alighted on various features of it.

"*Torre,*" said he.

"*Tour,*" said I. "*Tower.*"

"*Tour—tower*—that isn't very hard, is it?" Again he sought a word. "*Castello,*" he said.

"*Château,*" I answered. "*Castle.*"

"*Il castello ha una torre,*" said Giuseppe.

"*Le château a une tour—The castle has a tower,*" I translated. And Giuseppe repeated faithfully word for word. "I shall learn," he said at last.

By nine o'clock, a dozen or so of small boys, large-eyed and open-mouthed, had gathered, pattering, around us. And before long the whole company was droning after me in chorus the strange-sounding words that I explained. The boys thought it was great fun to say *hill* when you meant *collina;* and, for my own part, I learned for the first time the pleasure of teaching school.

Late in the evening, Giuseppe and I walked home alone.

"I thank you very much," he said. "You see, first of all, I want to be a better guide. It isn't only for the money, either. I really like to show people those pictures in the choir."

"I understand," said I. "For I, too, am a guide, Giuseppe."

"You—a guide!", he cried in surprise.

"Yes," said I. "Your business is to lead people to beautiful things, so that they may see them. That is my business too. I roam around the world, looking at lovely things until I love them. Then I go home and write about them, so that other people may love them too. Call us guides, Giuseppe, or call us artists—our business is the same."

The boy wondered a little. "Should you say, then, that Benozzo was a guide?"

"Oh, yes," I answered. "He found out what was beautiful in the world so that he might show it to other people."

"Benozzo—you—and I," Giuseppe murmured. "I never thought of that before."

V

TRAMPING IN THE ALPS

[1903]

V

TRAMPING IN THE ALPS

[1903]

THE things with most capacity to tire us are the things that we most delicately love. I had been roaming over Italy for many months, seeking forgotten frescoes in far-away hamlets and musing in the sanctity of churches; and when at last I reached Milan I longed eagerly never to look upon another picture nor to enter another church in all my life. My æsthetic sensibilities were tired—so tired that I actually stood in front of the multitudinous cathedral of Milan and called it a birthday-cake with candles—so tired that, although I had come to town expressly to study the paintings of Luini, I could never bring myself within less than a block of them without wheeling about and hurrying away. My friend Dick was tired also. Every afternoon he deliberately went to bed, in order to prevent himself from seeing the "Last Supper" of Leonardo. Once or twice I reminded him that Leonardo was his favourite painter. He merely answered, "Go away!"

When people are as tired as that, they need to take a walk. I suggested this to Dick one evening over coffee. He liked the thought of something that might be done with feet instead of brains. "We'll walk," said he.

It occurred to me that Switzerland was near. "Any paintings there?", he asked, suspiciously.

"Not one."

"Any architecture?"

"Nothing but châlets."

"Thank Heaven!", he breathed. "We'll start to-morrow morning."

We bought knapsacks, into which we flung such necessaries as a toothbrush, a pipe, and a pocket R. L. S.; we had our shoes shod with heavy iron nails; we arrayed ourselves in rowing shirts and sweaters, golf trousers and leather leggings; we purchased alpenstocks; and we confided our baggage to a tourist company's agent, telling him vaguely to send it anywhere in France and to let us know where it was when it got there.

A train dragged us to Arona, at the foot of the Lago Maggiore; and a steamer slid us up the lake to Locarno, the first town in Switzerland. Dick and I had heard of a city named Lucerne and knew from pictures that it sat beside a lake. Somehow we supposed that we must be going thither. So, stumbling on a British tourist, we asked him, "Where is Lake Lucerne?"

He gasped, amazed, and sputtered that it was half of Switzerland away.

"Quite so," said Dick. "How do you walk to it?"

The British tourist made a noise like a seltzer bottle, shuffled the pages of his Baedeker, and said that we should have to cross the St. Gothard Pass. Then he read altitudes in metres and distances in miles. At last a native slouched along to save us.

OVER AN ALPINE PASS

"That was how we found the pass. You can find anything in Switzerland if only you will let the rivers guide you."—Page 51.

"Which is the way to the St. Gothard?", I inquired.

The native was wise. He waved an arm at the Ticino River. "Follow that," said he.

We followed the Ticino for two days, all the way from its mouth to its source. That was how we found the pass. You can find anything in Switzerland, if only you will let the rivers guide you. They know much more about geography than British tourists. And they are wise in other ways. For instance, the Ticino taught us the jocund sport of Progressive Bathing. The sport is this. At a certain hour every day you throw off all your clothes and leap into the river you are following. You don't have to swim; the current swims for you. But the fun lies in the fact that each day the river is more narrow and more swift than it was the day before. Also it is much more cold. And the same stream that gave you a warm reception at its mouth is most forbiddingly frigid where it trickles from a glacier at its source.

The St. Gothard was our first pass, and we rushed at it with the eagerness of novices. I had never climbed a mountain before that, and supposed that the thing to do was just to walk up its slope. This I tried, until suddenly I slid backward many yards upon my chest, eating earth. Dick imbibed wisdom from my declension, and amazingly discovered that there were such things as trails. After that we climbed more circumspectly.

In the little tavern at the top, where we swallowed beer and cheese, wise ones told us of a stream whose name was Reuss. This was thin and guttery at first; but if only you had faith in it, it would lead you all the way to Lake Lucerne.

It was hard to believe in the Reuss, where it issued from a puddle of a pond; but we obeyed the wise ones. It led us down and ever down through a gash in the mountains more desolate than any other I had ever seen. At last it lured us to a valley that had the virtue of homeliness and was inhabited by towns with German names. Between Andermatt and Göschenen it gathered to a torrent and roared over a cataract beneath the Devil's Bridge. Here we rested.

If we had been old and wise, we should have spent that night in Göschenen; but being young, we did not know that we were weary, and resolved to lunge on to Amsteg. I shall never forget the delicious utter physical fatigue of the last few miles. I had no brain. Neither had Dick. He monotonously chanted old Ben Jonson's song, and whenever he came to "Not of itself but thee," he reverted to the first stanza and commenced all over again. Time and time again he drank to me only with his eyes; and to the reiterated rhythm of his droning we dragged our weary legs to Amsteg.

Here we fell into seats at table, and devoured. I don't think that I had ever really eaten before that. At any rate, I had never fully realized the divinity of food. So magnificently did we eat that it was only when we tried to rise from the table that we discovered that our legs had tightened stiff. The landlord and the landlord's son had to carry us to bed; and while Dick was groaning wearily, "I sent thee late a rosy wreath," I sank into immeasurable slumber.

In the morning we arose and tramped very agedly to Flüelen, the first port of Lake Lucerne. Here we met a po-

THE STAUBBACH AT LAUTERBRUNNEN

"Lauterbrunnen is memorable chiefly for the Staubbach—a shower-bath of a brook that falls scattery, sheer down a precipitous cliff."—Page 53.

lite steamboat that said it was willing to let us sit down all the length of the lake; and we accepted its gracious invitation. Surely that day, of all days, we had rush of weariness to the feet, a transit that is wholesome for the brain.

Lucerne itself, at the western end of the lake, is a happy holiday of a city, all roofs and spires, behind which the iron-hued Pilatus rises dark. It is a place where natives sing at night in taverns beside a rushing river; and where tourists wear clothes and buy things. Here Dick and I loitered for a day or two, because of broken feet—painting them with various kinds of new skin and trying (vainly) to forget them.

Later we forged southwesterly to Interlaken, which is a sort of Saratoga of a place, chiefly notable as a starting point for other places that are beautiful. From there we started on the accustomed tramp up the valley to Lauterbrunnen, in full view of the moon-white Jungfrau, that saintliest of mountains. Lauterbrunnen is memorable chiefly for the Staubbach—a shower-bath of a brook that falls scattery, sheer down a precipitous cliff. On top of that cliff, which we climbed by a serpentining earthy trail, is flung a handful of houses called Mürren. It is a homely little settlement, tinkly with cattle bells; but it affords one of the sublimest views in all the Alps. For across the valley stand unveiled the white peaks of the Bernese Overland—the Jungfrau, and the Eiger, and the Mönch—monarchical, serene, stupendous. We gained a nearer but less massy view of these by dropping down to Lauterbrunnen once again and crawling up over the shoulder of the Wengern Alp on the other side of the valley.

No other range of peaks in Switzerland can vie in sublimity with the Bernese Overland, except the Alps of the Valais. Thither, by gradual tramps, we made our way. We settled at Zermatt, a town hidden deep in the valley of the Visp—a valley running narrow, north and south, and therefore darkling in its depths except at noon. Zermatt is merely a place to climb out of. We spent a morning scrambling up over the humpy flanks of the Gorner Grat, until at last we sat upon its summit. There, finally, in the wide air, we felt ourselves upon the roof of the world. Enormous, to the south of us, rose the everlasting whiteness of the Breithorn and the Monte Rosa, gashed and gouged with rivers of ice; and westward stood alone the Matterhorn, sharp and dark—most terrible of mountains.

We gazed for hours silent, and were healed.

"Now we can go back to Italy," said Dick.

VI

A LITTLE LADY OF LAUSANNE

[1903]

VI

A LITTLE LADY OF LAUSANNE

[1903]

It was about nine in the morning when I climbed the dingy Market Steps that led to the Cathedral of Lausanne. I had an engagement at ten with some French friends of mine who lived upon the outskirts of the town; but I had allowed myself a little time to look over the aged church before I resigned myself to their entertainment.

Browning might have been thinking of those Market Steps when he wrote of his "rotten-runged rat-riddled stairs." I was quite breathless when I reached the top. The early sunlight fell sifted through waving trees upon the terrace and tempted me to calm. So I turned my back upon the church and looked out over the hill-slope of the town, falling away to Ouchy by the lake. It was a mellow morning. The air was blue and golden, and Lausanne looked clean and new. Lac Léman was lying in the distance. Beyond it were the Alps.

It is good to be upon a hilltop when the day is just beginning, with a little city seated at your feet. There comes a clatter of morning noises, commingled by distance and softened by the breeze. You know that life is there, and business—that men are starting out upon their "petty round

of irritating concerns and duties"; but around you on the summit there is peace. . . .

I was interrupted by a patter of tiny footsteps on the terrace. A little girl was playing about beneath the trees. She had a morning face, betokening a morning heart; her hair was tied back in a quaint tight knot on the top of her head; and her little skirts flew fluffy about her knees.

Her presence breathed good-morning; and all that I had to do was to reply.

"What are you playing at?", I asked her.

"I am just opening a grocery shop, monsieur. This is my counter," she added, patting one of the terrace benches with her fist. "Now I must go and gather in my stores."

She went scurrying about from place to place, collecting leaves and sticks and stones of various sizes. These she ranged upon the counter. The leaves were lettuce, I remember, and the stones all sorts of things—beans and turnips and potatoes. She was orderly and quick and business-like; and her shop was neat and clean.

"Now, monsieur, I am ready," she said at last, fixing herself prettily behind the counter.

"I will take some turnips," I said.

She did them up neatly in a vagrant piece of paper; and I paid her a copper sou. She took the money as a matter of course. It would have spoiled the game if she had shown the least surprise.

In a little while I said, "Your grocery shop is doing a flourishing business. If I were you, I should open a bakery as well."

It did not take her long to embark upon this later venture. And you should have seen the pies she made to order! Such deftness of feminine fingers! The dough was patted round and scalloped at the edges; a plum or two was inserted here and there; and then the whole was sweetly sprinkled with sugar. My appetite grew apace.

I played all sorts of purchasers for a while. Then I bought out the good-will of her business; and she in turn became the buying public.

It was now that she showed herself most admirable as an actress. You should have seen how prettily she aped the manners of a grown-up lady:—the little twitch of her skirt lifted deftly from imagined dust—that quaint pursing of the mouth that women always assume in bargaining—the look of keen selectiveness in examining the goods—and the upward toss of the chin which said, "That is too dear, monsieur." For the first time in my life I understood the beauty of mere business.

And next, to vary the game, we entered into partnership. She greeted our imagined customers as I have often greeted the people of my dreams. She made them real by treating them like gentlemen.

When the day ended and the shop was closed, we sat at home beside the fire (for we were married now), and told each other all about ourselves. Ernestine was her name. She lived in a little sunburned cottage over there beyond the trees. That was her mother shaking things out of the window. Yes, she loved her mother very much. But school? —Oh, the teacher had a way of getting cross when a little

girl drifted away in day-dreams and forgot all about the lesson. And then—it was much more fun to play beneath the trees. Didn't I think so?

Of course I did. It was more fun too, I told her, than travelling from town to town looking at statues and churches and other tedious interesting things. I was tired of travelling; it was just like going to school when one was grown up and didn't have to.

"You come from far away, monsieur?"

"Four thousand miles," I answered. "I come from over the ocean."

Ernestine knew all about the ocean. It was that gray blank space that looked so wide upon the map. Beyond it was America.

Did she know about New York?—Oh, yes, that was in South America, wasn't it? There were two Americas, she told me—one at the top and one at the bottom. Her eyes shone wide with cosmic consciousness.

"You know, Ernestine," said I, "we speak another language over there—the same language that the English use. And when I talk to your little cousins in New York, I say all sorts of strange words that you would never understand."

That must be very queer, thought Ernestine.

Then I said a sentence or two in English, and my wife was much amazed. It was our first conjugal misunderstanding.

There was a sudden ringing of many bells, recalling me to the ordinary world. It was ten o'clock. I remembered my grown-up friends in the garden on the outskirts of the town. We had planned a ramble for the morning, and I could not disappoint them.

"That's my school bell, Ernestine," said I. "I shall have to run fast, for I am late."

Her eyes protested. "Don't let us play school," she said.

"Ah, Ernestine," I answered, "it isn't play. I am going in real earnest.'

"But to-morrow?"

"I shall be in Geneva."

"Ah, no, monsieur . . ."

"And in another month I shall be back with your little cousins overseas, talking English once again."

There was a quaint side-twitch to her lips. "*Eh bien*, monsieur," she said, with a little quiver in her voice. "Good-bye, then."

She thrust her tiny hands out toward me. There was a mist over her little eyes, as they looked up into mine. And then . . .

Not until I was half way down the hill did I give a thought to the Cathedral of Lausanne. Dear me, I hadn't seen the church, after climbing all those weary steps! I looked it up in Baedeker. "The Interior (352′ long, 150′ wide)," said the guide-book, "is remarkable for its symmetry." Ah, Baedeker!,—the book without a soul!

I spent the rest of the day in grown-up wise, talking about the aims of Art, in an alien tongue. My French friends are unusually beautiful, as people go; and all was as it should be. But that evening when I was sailing back to Geneva from Ouchy by the lake, I forgot all about the pleasant afternoon, and once again, in memory, climbed the dingy Market Steps. And just to please my fancy, I desecrated the back

of a time-table by scribbling a little sonnet—a playful poem all about a child:—

"Some cakes, monsieur, or will you drink some tea?—"
A little girl was playing in the square
In front of the cathedral. Seated there,
She kept a very neat boulangerie
Of mud pies and the like. She offered me
The best. I purchased the substantial fare;
Played a long time at buying, with an air
As gay as hers; then—"Must you go?", said she.

A moment's pause. Two little hands in mine;
And little eyes that looked through tiny tears;
A little, quivering voice no longer gay.
"Adieu, monsieur."—"Adieu!"—Oh, child of nine,
I shall remember you for many years
When all Lausanne beside has passed away.

Ernestine has never seen this sonnet. She could not read it if I sent it to her, because it is written in the language of her little cousins. But I have sent her many lovely memories overseas, to let her know that I have not forgotten.

And now, as I am writing in New York, I wonder what Ernestine is doing in Lausanne. Day-dreaming in the school-room, perhaps, or playing store with younger boys than I.

Often I think of them, those younger boys. When Ernestine is grown a woman and puts on for good and all the fine-lady airs she wore awhile for me, when the little skirts that blew around her knees are really 'dangered by the dust, one of those younger boys will come and greet her underneath the terrace trees. And there they will sit and play an old, old game until the moon sweeps southward over Ouchy

by the lake. It will be very still above the city in the wide and holy night. Then there will come a look into the eyes of Ernestine—a look that once I glimpsed there when she was but a child; and the little hands, grown womanly, will be thrust out to that younger boy. And then . . .

Be good to her, boy of dreams; for once I loved her too.

VII

MARSEILLES TO GENOA, ALONG THE RIVIERA

[1903]

VII

MARSEILLES TO GENOA, ALONG THE RIVIERA

[1903]

Marseilles is the Chicago of France. It is a brawling colossus of commercialism. Its monuments are built with money, not with love. Its people point with pride to their new cathedral, Sainte Marie-Majeure; with pride, neither in the beauty of holiness nor in the holiness of beauty, but in the millions of francs it cost to heap the stones. They tell you that their boulevards are more brilliant than those of Paris, for the Marseillais are braggarts, all of them. But as you stroll amid the swarming turbulence of their avenues, you are saddened by a waste of wealth—enormous lavishness untastefully applied. The cafés of Marseilles are garish, tawdry, meretricious. The public places are full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. The city is *parvenu* and *nouveau riche;* it is *bourgeois* emulous of *gentilhomme.* It has no taste; it has no sense of incongruity. It thinks that to be large is to be great, and that the value of things is measured by their cost.

From the blatant boulevards of a city such as this, I naturally sought refuge in its slums; and here, at least, I found sublimity. It was, to be sure, sublimity of squalor; but even filth assumes a grandeur when it grows gigantic.

Narrow sewers of streets, overshadowed by lean and rickety tenements knocking their foreheads together—tenements spawning bedraggled children and dishevelled, screeching women—streets raucous with cries and curses, reeking with the rot of garbage, tepid with the stewed vapour of the underworld; in all of this I found transcendency. Whatever, in its own qualities, exceeds all else that is like it in the world, is monumental; and, therefore, in the very vileness of the Marseilles slums I found a grandeur that was lacking in the showy and glittering quarters of the town.

But the squalor, as well as the tinsel, of Marseilles seemed empty of romance; and again I sought salvation. I climbed the hill of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde, and looked down upon the harbour. And there and then I was reminded of the story-telling world. Upon a little island sat the Château d'If, with walls and parapets and towers bronzed by centuries of sun—the Château d'If of Monte Cristo. For a long, long time I looked upon it; and my memory reverted to those early years when I used to sit up nights with Edmond Dantès, attending, breathless, while he burrowed through the walls of that very castle.

The kingdom of romance is within us. We create beauty in the things we see by looking at them beautifully, and we create adventure all around us when we walk the world inwardly aglow with love of life. Old Dumas had awakened such a glow within me; and when I plunged once more into the city, I plunged into a region of romance. Instinctively I made for the harbour, where huddled ships heaved up a forestry of masts and disgorged upon the quays a rabble of sailors from old romantic lands—Spain and Italy and

Egypt, Algiers, Greece, and Turkey. I liked these sailors. They had the right piratical look—blue-bearded faces over red neckerchiefs. There was a sense of sea-salt about their stained and faded shirts and patchy trousers. Also, I liked the language that they spoke, the *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean, a jargon without grammar, made up of the roots of French and Spanish and Italian words interspersed with African ejaculations and slippery syllables from Asia. These men, therefore, I made my companions; and thereafter I enjoyed Marseilles.

Two of them, who were Algerians, introduced me to a gambling game which pleased me. We slunk along the jetty to a nook where the sea-wall shielded us from wind, and posted sentinels to warn us of police. The simple manner of the game was thus:—One of the Algerians had three cards, two of which were black and one was red. These he manipulated deftly, toying with them teasingly before my eyes, until he suddenly flung them face downward upon the ground. It then became my duty to hand him a twenty-franc gold piece, after which I was to pick up one of the cards. If I selected the red card, he would return my twenty francs with twenty francs besides; if I selected one of the black cards, he would keep my money. The other Algerian watched me. Six times, being absolutely certain which was the red card (such was the curious effect of the game upon my nerves), I picked it up and found it black. Then, having lost twenty-four dollars, I considered that the Algerians were better men than I, and admired them in consequence. Furthermore, I considered that the only way to win was to play against my own unalterable certainty. Thereafter,

being absolutely sure which was the red card, I resolutely picked up one of the others. I had now one chance in two; I was playing to beat the law of probabilities instead of playing to beat a man. Luck was with me, and I won three times out of four. At this, the deft Algerian grew nervous—and was mine; for, noticing his nerves, I shifted tactics and played again the card that I believed in. I finished sixteen dollars ahead of the game—and found myself a hero. For the sailors took me back to their ship and introduced me as a better man than they. My glory was undeserved, I know; it was based on luck and a little psychologic trick; but I liked the grunted adulation of those rovers of the deep; and it was not without sadness that I left Marseilles at last, to make my way along the Riviera to Genoa.

The Riviera is, I suppose, the greatest winter resort in the world. Town after town along this stretch of coast is made up entirely of villas and hotels. The climate is semi-tropical and, from fall to spring, propitious; and the coast is of extraordinary beauty. The maritime Alps, sinking southerly into green and rolling hills, here plunge headlong into the wide blue water of the Mediterranean. Juts of cliffy headland, rounding into peninsulas or breaking off into islands, scallop the coast with harbours; and by these harbours are set villages of villas, where rich idlers from the north come to bask beneath a winter sun.

These towns, though differing in detail, are alike in all essential features. Each of them is a lazy, laughing, holiday casino of a place, careless, rich, and indolently lovely. Each has its promenade of palm trees along the water-side; each, its glittering halls for dancing and for gambling; each, its

THE RIVIERA—VILLAGES OF VILLAS

"These villas, for the most part, are set in tropic gardens,"—Page 71.

boulevards for driving, its luring walks to hill-tops commanding wide vistas of the sea; each, its high-society hotels and aristocratic villas. These villas, for the most part, are set in tropic gardens. In colour, the houses are toned to harmonize with the prevailing atmosphere. Mild tints predominate—rose and yellow, buff and skyey blue, amber and the green of budding leaves. And these gentle colours, set beside the sapphire sea, beneath the turquoise sky, and backed by the emerald of luxuriant vegetation, produce a visual melody which I have never seen rivalled elsewhere in the world.

Such a town is Cannes, such Mentone, such San Remo. And such a town is Nice, the largest and most typical of all. Nice is a gorgeous place, and made me feel idle-rich all the time that I was there. I sat around the casinos and strolled along the Promenade des Anglais, as if I had nothing in the world to do. I soon began to fear lest my love of swimming should lure me into the sea at an unfashionable hour. I was on the point of degenerating into an aristocrat.

From this I was saved (it was springtime) by two mosquitoes. These mosquitoes visited me after midnight; and, having preyed upon me, made such a droning in my room that I lay sleepless until dawn. The insects, though anguishing to the ear, were undiscernible to the eye; and my only defense against them was an uninterrupted current of cursory remarks. I cursed them in French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, German, English, and American; but they failed somehow to appreciate what I had to say. Therefore, at dawn, I decided to shame them by leaving Nice. If they wouldn't go, I would. This, you will admit, was courteous

of me. But then, it never matters very much to me where I am.

Nobody was up in the hotel except myself; but, being honest, I left money around in funny places, to be discovered after I was gone. Then a friend of mine named Baedeker suggested that I walk to Monte Carlo over the great Corniche road. It was only twelve miles before breakfast; and, being American, I accepted the suggestion. For this I am unutterably grateful, both to the mosquitoes and to Mr. Baedeker; for the Corniche is the greatest road that I have ever traversed, save only the highway from Salerno to Amalfi. It is a road of panoramic vistas. Serpentining out of Nice, it climbs the coastwise hills, above Villefranche, above Beaulieu, above many a little cape and promontory. On this particular morning the air was diaphanous with faint mist, veiling the cliffs, laying soft hands upon the foreheads of still-sleeping villages, and melting the distance into an indistinguishable merge of sky and sea.

Ten miles from Nice the road abutted upon La Turbie, a little hamlet planted at the head of the valley of Sainte Dévote, which slopes away beneath it to the sea. La Turbie is noted as a place to look from; and there I absorbed at the same time breakfast and the view. Beneath me lay an entire independent nation. This is not hyperbole; for the nation that I speak of contains less than six square miles, and is merely a little bite out of France. Its name is the Principality of Monaco; its ruler is a sovereign prince; its capitol is the prince's palace; its navy is the prince's yacht; its reason for existence is the gambling casino of Monte Carlo. It contains three towns—Monte Carlo, La Conda-

mine, and Monaco proper. It coins its own money and engraves its own postage stamps. And, I suppose, it is the most uniformly beautiful country in the world.

Certainly it was beautiful as I looked upon it first from La Turbie. Monaco proper is a peninsular promontory crowned with the prince's palace, the prince's cathedral, and the prince's gardens; La Condamine reclines in the bent arm of a little bay; and Monte Carlo bulges into the sea. Into this dainty little principality I trudged downward by a declining mountain trail. I roamed over the whole nation in a few hours, swam in the placid sweep of bay, and advanced on the casino.

Roulette is a familiar game, and everyone has read about the casino of Monte Carlo. I shall, therefore, state merely that I liked the palms and exotic plants that grew in the casino gardens, and that I made a somewhat amusing entrance into the gaming halls. At the casino office, before the authorities admit you, they ask you many questions—who you are and why, where you come from and what reason you had for leaving, and many more that I forget. I never like such questions; and when a person unwarrantably asks me my name, I usually say that it is Winterbottom or Terwilliger. At Monte Carlo they ended up by asking my profession. They had me that time, as the saying goes; for I have never yet been able to discover what it is. Therefore I paused, considering, until my sense of humour prompted me. "I am a poet," I answered. An official lifted his eyebrows. "A poet? That's not a *profession*," said he. But then another official, divinely devoid of humour, answered, "Maybe it is, in *his* country." And so, glow-

ing with a patriotic pride of a nature that America has never yet deserved, I was admitted.

Nonchalantly I loafed along the Riviera until I came at last to Genoa—a city which deserves its historic epithet, superb. Its main features are set forth in a description by the poet Thomas Gray, which (though it was written in 1739) is so aptly selective and so wonderfully mapped that I must append it here:—

> Only figure to yourself a vast semicircular basin, full of fine blue sea, and vessels of all sorts and sizes, some sailing out, some coming in, and others at anchor; and all around it palaces, and churches peeping over one another's heads, gardens, and marble terraces full of orange and cypress trees, fountains, and trellis-works covered with vines, which altogether compose the grandest of theatres.

Because of its serviceable harbour, Genoa has in all ages been a commercial city; but its commercialism has been magnificent—not mean-minded and assuming like that of Marseilles. Its harbour, especially as viewed from the light-house at the western horn, is beautiful as well as busy; there is nobility in the way in which tier above tier of buildings climb to the summits of the encircling hills. The streets are rich with Renaissance palaces built by merchant princes of old—monarchs of wealth earned grandly by traffic on the seas. Even the slums are colourful and picturesque. And as I walked the streets and avenues, or lolled along the harbour-side, or sat upon a hill-top and looked down, I gloried in the city feeling once again, and had no reason to lament what man has made of man.

Although, in this memento, I have no wish to advertise a particular hotel, I cannot refrain from stating that in Genoa

THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

"Beneath me lay an entire independent nation . . . the Principality of Monaco."—Page 72.

I put up at the Hotel Smith. Who could have kept himself from steering to a hostelry so ludicrously named? I advanced gravely into the office, handed the clerk my visiting card, and said in English, "I should like to speak to Mr. Smith; for, though I cannot recollect his face, I seem somehow to have heard his name before." The clerk, as I had guessed, knew scarcely a word of English. He wagged his head sadly, and muttered a strange admixture of Italian and French. I pretended not to understand him; and all the time that I was there, I persisted in feigning that Smith was not a fiction, and asked every day in English if the gentleman were well.

VIII

CARDIFF, BRISTOL, AND BATH

[1907]

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CARDIFF, BRISTOL, AND BATH

[1907]

For nearly three months I served as purser, doctor, and third officer of the British tank ship *Mira*, at the munificent salary of one shilling a month. Whenever we put into port, I scrambled ashore for a day or two and looked about me; and after we had plunged to sea again, I enlivened the long evenings in the saloon by jotting down a record of my adventures. From this casual diary I now print my recollections of two crowded days. I take up the narrative at a moment when the *Mira* was steaming southward through Carnarvon Bay, bound for the coaling station of Penarth, and pass on to the record of my many-mooded rambles in Cardiff, Bristol, and Bath.

The captain roused me at dawn. We were abreast of the Bishop and Clerks—an aptly named congregation of great rocks lying off St. David's Head. The Bishop wore a lighthouse, but the other rocks were denuded and iron-grim. There was a fresh and wistful coming in of day. Midway aslant of St. Bride's Bay we discerned a little sloop cruising in the early breeze, with C F painted black upon her weather-coloured sail. She was a Cardiff pilot cutter. We stopped and hailed her. She carried a crew of three men only—the

pilot and two sailors. One of the sailors marvellously sculled the pilot to us in a little rowboat. The pilot, Wright by name, was an undersized, seedy, unkempt, and weather-worn little man, looking exactly like an amiable street dog. His voice was a smothered, unintelligible bark. He had been at sea a month, vainly searching for a ship to pilot, and thanked his God to be upon a bridge. No wonder he was unshaved and needed washing! I soon learned that he was a pleasant dog and wouldn't bite. Besides, he knew the sea. We cast a line to his cutter, and towed her all the way to port. The two sailors were glad enough of the swift splash of her nose through the screw-churned wake of the *Mira*, glad of our hard tobacco also, and provisions of fresh food. They had not enjoyed a wash in fresh water for three weeks.

Clinging to the coast, we steamed between Skomar and Skokum Islands—rocky, high, and lonely, and taking a colour of old gold from the morning slant of sun. Passing St. Anne's Head, we ran up signal flags and were answered. Beyond the headland, Milford Haven opened inland, an enormous harbour, serviceable for the navy. At Linney Head I went to bed again. It was eight A. M. I slept till nearly noon.

I was roused abreast of Worms Head, at the entrance to the Bristol Channel. Thereafter the channel narrowed, between the mountainous wooded heave of Somerset and the gently rolling farm lands of South Wales. The water was processional with little ships; the current was wavy and slapping; the afternoon widened golden. I stood upon the bridge with the little spaniel of a pilot and scanned the coasts, through glasses. On the Welsh side, a little beyond

the Nash, I obtained a good view of Lord Dunraven's castle —a great Tudor-looking house, pleasantly seated in a vast and variable estate. We hugged the Welsh coast; but the high forestry of the English hills lay beautiful in sight not many miles to starboard. Truly, it was fine cruising that afternoon.

Beyond the brick and chimneyed busy town of Barry we rounded northward into Cardiff Roads. Penarth Head stood tall and sheer, with a foreign-looking church upon the top. Beyond it Cardiff harbour rounded inland. The *Mira* was unable to enter Penarth Docks until the tide should run two hours higher. Therefore she swung around and anchored in the Roads. With two days leave of absence, I climbed at once down a rope ladder into the pilot cutter, which had hauled alongside to sail me ashore, and made for Cardiff in the little sailboat.

The *Mizpah* was the pilot cutter's name. The two sailors, Sam and George, handled her with careless-seeming ease. Close-hauled, we splashed headlong through the wavy water of the harbour. I liked the sailors. They were huge-chested, tense-armed fellows, simple of speech. George brewed tea over a little stove in the centre of the dingy cabin, while Sam manned the tiller with his knees. The sheet was tied. The two men told me of the drear monotony of their month of waiting on the sea. They had put into Milford Haven for water once or twice; except for that, they had tossed idle. I meditated on the cabinned, cribbed confinement of that sea-heaved box of boards.

Tugboats hailed us in the harbour. "What have you got, George?"

"The tank," he would answer, simply. He was not superfluous of speech.

"Out a long time, eh?"

"Yes," said George; and then, to another tug, "The tank," he answered. All the little captains seemed to know him.

One skipper mumbled at him through a megaphone. I caught something about telegraphing to Milford, missing the *Mizpah* by an hour, sending word vainly up and down the coast—and then, a sudden shock of news.

"Who's dead?", I asked, quietly.

"My mother," answered George. "Two weeks ago; they couldn't find me."

Sam said nothing. Neither did I. George took the tiller. After a long time he mumbled, "So the old woman's gone"; and that was all.

We hove to beside a lashed huddle of other cutters, made fast, and lowered sail. A boatman sculled a rowboat to take us ashore. "Anybody told you?", asked the boatman.

"Yes," said George.

"You'd just left Milford before the telegram got there."

George did not answer. After we had stepped ashore, he said to me, "I would 'a' liked——" and there the sentence stopped. He had a letter to deliver to the office of our owners. "Good-bye," said he.

It was five o'clock. I took a tramway through the busy streets of Cardiff to the castle. The town was all a-flutter with flags and bunting; for the King was coming on the royal yacht from Ireland to open the new great Cardiff dock two days from then. Everywhere were pictures of Edward and

Alexandra, and inscriptions of welcome to Their Majesties in both Welsh and English. High Street and St. Mary's Street were swarming with inhabitants and visitors. The town was one big bustling holiday. Devoid of decorations, it would have seemed like any well-built Middle Western American city; for Cardiff is a modern product, and commerce is its sole excuse for being. Cardiff Castle, the residence of the Marquis of Bute, is more picturesque than venerable; but its towers rise pleasantly from a park beside the winding Taff.

From Cardiff Castle I travelled out to the little town of Llandaff, three miles away—sitting beside the driver on the top of a groaning omnibus. Up a gradual rise of hill, the road climbed between the walls of country-seats. The Welsh country rolled away, green and thickly shaded, upon either hand. The sun was still high, and the air was cool and clear.

Llandaff is the smallest city in Great Britain. A few whitewashed cottages, the crumbled ruins of an old Episcopal palace, a homely little green, with the city cross surrounded by somnolent and dreaming houses—that is all; except the cathedral, which is what I came to see.

Llandaff Cathedral is not a great church. It has no power; but it is rich in charm. The situation is very lovely. It sits in a green graveyard by the Taff, in a hollow underneath a hill. The place is silent and aware. You reach it by a hill-path winding down from a lich-gate near the ruined bishop's palace. All down the little path you are glad of the trees that grow unarranged and copious about the church. Then you wander among graves, and are glad of the solitude

and silence, of which the cathedral grows to seem the stone epitome. It takes time to get to know that church. Like all hushed and lonely presences, it does not make advances to you. But it has its memories to divulge, in Norman doorways, decorated windows, and a Tudor tower. While I was still circling round it, stepping among gravestones under trees, the church wakened into choric song. It was the hour of evening service, and I went inside.

The interior is very simple. Its most memorable feature is a grand old Norman arch between the choir and the presbytery. After the service, I looked long upon the altarpiece, which was painted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It is an Adoration of the Shepherds, flanked by the boy David going forth to slay Goliath, and David the King musing over his harp. The Adoration is very gracefully composed. The whole picture is deeper and richer in colour than any other of Rossetti's I remember. It is worth going to Llandaff to see.

I returned to Cardiff on the omnibus, and immersed myself in the holiday throng of St. Mary's Street. In less than five minutes I discovered that there are more pretty girls in South Wales in proportion to the population than in any other section of the globe that I have yet investigated. It must be dreadfully unpeaceable to live in Cardiff, unless you are a Mormon. An hour of it flung me into flutters.

It was quite by accident—or shall I say by Providence?—that I met the Golden Girl of Cardiff. Quite casually I entered a picture shop to buy postal cards—and the Golden Girl looked at me over the counter. I think I must have gasped; I know that she overcame me like a blow upon the wind. She was warm with the glow that Pyecroft describes

as "just it," in that memorable passage of Mr. Kipling's "Mrs. Bathurst." She had golden hair and golden eyes; her face was like a summer sun dawning. A glance at the black-gowned body of her gave you somehow a tactile, not a visual, sensation. She looked upon me calmly, and asked me what I wanted. What a question to hurl at a man so suddenly! What I wanted! . . . Indeed! I should have uttered an appalling lie at that moment if I had said a postal card —though a moment before . . . And besides, what a silly thing to ask for from the Golden Girl! "I can't tell you," I said, absurdly. "I thought I could, but I can't." Laughter broke out in her golden eyes and saved me. "Thanks," said I, "I dare say that was it. If you'll just laugh a little more, I may be able to remember what I thought I wanted when I came into the shop. Laugh at *me*, I mean—laugh at me."

I suppose I was insane. I am sure at least that the Golden Girl thought so. I hastened to explain that I wasn't used to Cardiff. She showed me postal cards. By carefully looking at *them* instead of at *her*, I grew almost sensible. The Golden Girl thereupon discerned that I was a human being after all. We conversed. Suddenly I imagined a silly stratagem. Wanting a dozen postal cards, I carefully purchased only two. Thereupon I walked around the block, reëntered the shop, and bought another couple. This absurd procedure I repeated till the dozen of the post cards was completed. At each return I knew the girl better, and she was more amused. At the end, a mutual delight in the ridiculous awakened sympathy between us; and I was able to tell the Golden Girl that she was so very, very beautiful

that—I was going to leave Cardiff by the very next train out of the station. Without a word of farewell, I hastened to the railway and took the nine-thirty for Bristol. In the train I decided once for all that I was, and am, an ass.

The Grand Hotel in Bristol looked imposing and aristocratic. They made me pay in advance, because my only baggage was stowed away in my port and starboard pockets. But when I asked for a warm bath at eleven P. M., they replied meekly that the chambermaid was in bed. "I don't want the chambermaid; I want a bath," said I. This was a simple and civilized remark, but it amazed them. "What surprises you," I asked—"my desire to be clean, or my lack of interest in the virgin slumbers of a female I have never even seen?" They answered that they would try. A porter drew the bath. I bathed and slept.

Bristol is an aged-looking and very agreeable city, climbing all up and down a gathering of little hills about the winding basin of the Avon. Although it is essentially a place of commerce, its business is somehow poetized by history. It is free from the brawling modernity of an upstart metropolis like Manchester. It is full of fine buildings, both of the neo-classic type and of timbered gable ends and bits of Gothic.

Early in the morning I made directly for the church of St. Mary Redcliffe. I went, of course, on Chatterton's account; but the church won me at once for its own sake, apart even from historical association. Queen Elizabeth called it "the fairest, the goodliest, and most famous parish-church in England"; and I dare say the great old queen was right, for (among many hundreds) I remember none to approach it.

ST. MARY REDCLIFFE—BRISTOL

"'The fairest, the goodliest, and most famous parish-church in England.' . . . It is a poem in perpendicular."—Page 86.

It stands in a little close upon a hill in a shabby commercial quarter of the town. All else around it is as nothing. It is a poem in perpendicular. The interior seemed to me one of the most delicate of human works. The church is tall and slender; its lines aspire, all of them; the vertical upsoaring of its dainty clustered columns lures the eye to the groined vaulting and will not let the gaze rest level. Truly, this is an edifice of air.

I climbed to the old muniment room over the fantastic northern porch. It was here that Chatterton (whose uncle was the sexton of the church) claimed to have discovered the Rowley manuscripts. It is a small polygonal chamber with vertical slits for windows, through which you look over the housetops of hilly Bristol. Old oaken chests lie cracked and empty underneath the windows.

A heavy wooden door creaks on iron hinges behind you. It is a low-vaulted, cramping, insignificant room. Yet here the boy retired silent to meditate on fancies born, doubtless, of that lace of forestry congealed to stone that is the church itself. It is touching to think that this loveliest of parish churches stood unheeded and despised throughout the other-minded Eighteenth Century, until a boy saw it for the perfect thing it was, caught the message of its trellised tracery, and vivified therewith the minds of many artists after him in England and in Germany. There is an ugly monument to Chatterton in the close, with a stupid inscription apologizing for his suicide. I was more impressed by the tombs of the Canynges in the southern aisle and transept.

Being pressed for time, I was obliged to hasten from St. Mary Redcliffe to Bristol Cathedral on the other side of the

Avon. This was unfortunate for the cathedral. It is a beautiful edifice, and has many points of interest; but it suffers sorely by comparison with the fairer parish church. It is curious in being devoid of both triforium and clerestory. The aisles are of the same height as the nave. Its most memorable feature is the Norman Chapter House, surprisingly delicate as well as grand.

The cathedral lies pleasantly beside a pretty open square named College Green. About the little park are other memorable buildings. The College Gateway, rearing an oriel of perpendicular above a stately Norman arch, is beautiful to contemplate. Across the square is the tiny Mayor's Chapel, a little gem of Gothic tucked between houses, with quaint old monuments in a Tudor sanctuary.

I returned by cab to the centre of the town, and roamed the picturesque old streets afoot. The quarter was rich with timbered houses. The finest of these was St. Peter's Hospital, exquisitely carved. In Wine Street I saw the house where Robert Southey was born. I have always respected the painstaking humdrum of Southey's life, and liked his work above the obloquy of recent criticism. The old city wall arches over Broad Street, bearing on its back the little sanctuary of St. John, with a sharp spire pointing high above the roadway. The tower of St. Stephen's Church, in the hollow near St. Augustine's Bridge, was noble in outline, and delicate with perpendicular decoration. The one o'clock train hurried me to Bath.

Bath is, of course, a very ancient place, with many Roman ruins; but to me it appealed only as an epitome of the Eight-

eenth Century. It is a city of circles and crescents, squares and terraces, beautifully rising from the valley of the Avon up the slopes of the surrounding Downs. It is solidly built of grayish yellow limestone. Nearly all its streets and squares are in the formal neo-classic style. The town has an air of politeness and aristocracy, a regularity of simple elegance, that I have seen excelled nowhere, except perhaps in Napoleonic Paris. I was quite amazed at the way in which it won me. Being an ardent Goth in architecture, an ardent romantic in literature, an ardent individualist in social theory and practice—being also impatient of politeness, careless of decorum, ungenteel in manners and in habits—I have always felt out of place in the Eighteenth Century, and have been appreciative only intellectually of its artistic creations. But there in Bath I felt suddenly at home with Beau Nash and all the other silken-suited gentlemen who gave the city brilliancy and colour in the century of formalism. I was lured out of all my prejudices to a sudden love of "tea-cup times."

In a cab and a Bath chair, I had myself driven and dragged up the regular, well-mannered streets, around the Circus and the Royal Crescent, with columned houses ranged demurely, and through the Victorian Park, with its lovely slopes of lawn and leafage. I was a little disturbed because the people within view all wore the colourless and inexpressive costumes of the present century. I desired caped coats of buff, clouded canes, and silken hose, and a dangle of light lace over drooping wrists. I wished a glimpse of young Sheridan and Miss Linley and the brawling Captain

Mathews. Without them the city seemed empty and dead. It was a seat of elegant urbanity whence everyone had moved away a century ago.

Thus I felt a sadness as I wandered over Bath. I don't think that the city has changed at all (except from tramways) since the hey-dey of its glory. But the great ones are departed, and have left no trace behind them except commemorative tablets on the houses they inhabited. "Here lived Lord Nelson" and "Here died James Quinn"—these, and others like them, were melancholy legends, when the town itself stood undecayed. "I felt like one who treads alone some banquet-hall deserted" . . . and all the rest of Moore's deeply moving song.

Of course, I visited the Great Pump Room, which was empty and therefore dull, and the adjacent Roman Baths. The latter would have interested me more if I had never been in Italy. The ruins were extensive; and upon them was superimposed a modern edifice in the Roman style.

The Abbey Church of Bath charmed me very greatly. It is a fine example of my favourite style of Tudor perpendicular. I found it less exquisite than Chatterton's church in Bristol, but more curious in detail (especially the west façade) and more consciously ornate in the interior. The fan-vaulting was very fine, and gladdened me. The church was very light and airy inside because of its tall windows; and I grew fain to call it by its meaningful nickname, the "Lantern of England." The aisles were crowded with monuments to Augustan worthies.

Again I went forth, to walk this time, through the formal streets, over Pultney Bridge, which carries houses as if there

ROMAN RUINS AT BATH

"The ruins were extensive; and upon them was superimposed a modern edifice in the Roman style."—Page 90.

were no river underneath, to the superb rectitude of Great Pultney Street; and back again along the River Avon, with restful views of rolling green environs rising to the graceful summits of the Downs.

Unwillingly I left the Eighteenth Century, grown strangely dear to me against expectancy. With affectionate retrospection, I gazed back from the railway window, over the now quiet but ever graceful little city taking the sunlight in the hollow of surrounding hills.

IX

THE ELIZABETHAN "LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER"

[1910]

IX

THE ELIZABETHAN "LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER"

[1910]

In New York, the "Little Church Around the Corner" first received its quaint nickname from an actor, under circumstances which are recounted in the Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson; and it has come to be known mainly through the close relation which it has maintained with members of the theatrical profession. It lies around a quiet and secluded little close, nested away among big buildings, in what has lately become a business district of the city; but it is distant only a stone's throw from the Great White Way of the actors. Many of the profession have been married there; many have lain there for their last obsequies before being borne to the grave. The little church has been a haven of hospitality to actors; and the actors have grown to love the little church, as a dignified and decorous monument to their craft.

In Elizabethan days there stood upon the Bankside, only a stone's throw from the Globe Theatre, a church which was similarly hospitable to the actors and the dramatists, at a time when both players and playwrights were consigned by law to the status of "rogues and vagabonds." This church, bearing the beautiful, quaint name of St. Saviour's, was

already ancient in the days of Shakespeare. It had been founded as early as 1106, by one of the bishops of Winchester, to serve as the Priory Church of St. Mary Overy. In 1540 it was converted into a parish church by Henry VIII; and it continued to be known as St. Saviour's until 1905, when it was raised to an episcopate and christened the Cathedral of Southwark. But Southwark Cathedral seems too pompous an appellation for such a homely and habitable church; and those who care for the connotation of old names must continue to call it by the title that was familiar to Shakespeare.

St. Saviour's, in Elizabethan days, must have been the sole considerable church in that random and riff-raff district across the Thames where the theatres were congregated. It was natural, therefore, that those actors and playwrights who attended church at all should have drifted to St. Saviour's. The records tell us that the great actor Edward Alleyn served as churchwarden of the parish. Philip Massinger and John Fletcher are buried in the choir; and beside them is buried Edmund Shakespeare, an actor and a younger brother of the poet. But the literary memories of St. Saviour's are not confined to the Elizabethan age: they extend as far back as Chaucer and Gower, and forward through Bunyan to Goldsmith and Doctor Johnson. All of these giants dwelt at one time or another in the parish and were associated with the church.

For any one who is thrilled with the sentiment of high and far-off names, St. Saviour's is by far the most interesting church in London—with the single exception, of course, of Westminster Abbey. But it is a church that is very seldom visited by tourists—or "trippers," as the British call them.

Most Americans who come to London depart without ever finding out that such a monument of memories exists. The reason is that St. Saviour's is situated on the southern, or Surrey, side of the Thames; and there is a tradition among travellers that there is nothing notable upon the Surrey side and that one may see all of London without ever crossing the river. This tradition, so happily fallacious, is fortunate, however, for the literary pilgrim to St. Saviour's, since it insures him a solitude of contemplation which can never be enjoyed in such tourist-ridden churches as the Abbey. He may visit the grave of Fletcher without hearing a cockney verger explain who Fletcher was, in parrot-fashion, to a score of drifting, gaping, chattering travellers from Kansas City.

St. Saviour's is, for all that, easy to reach. From the Monument you walk across London Bridge; and there you are. In a little close very near the river, encroached upon by warehouses and market buildings, the old church stands—the sole survivor of the spacious days of the Bankside—the only building in that now huddled and vociferous commercial quarter which was familiar to the eyes of Shakespeare. All else has been swept away by the marching of modernity. The site of the Globe Theatre is now sprawled over by a brewery. The other theatres and the famous taverns were destroyed so long ago that authorities now differ as to their exact situation. But the great old church remains.

You see it first from the southerly incline of London Bridge, looking westward over the four quaint gables of its Lady Chapel to the taller choir and the pinnacled tower over the crossing. The church sits half below you in a little

hollow of turf and trees; and to this tiny close you descend, to walk around the church. All day there is an unremitted roar and rattle of traffic over London Bridge; and the Borough Market, which encroaches on the close, is usually raucous with the cries of hucksters. Yet, somehow, in the close itself, you have a sense of absolute quietude—a quietude made audible by the singing of birds in the few forlorn trees within the railings. A tall warehouse nearly jostles the church upon the north; there is no room to enter by the west façade, because the drays of market men bump and clatter close to the very wall; and the market stalls to the south are squalid and unpicturesque, and strewn with trampled rotting greenery. And yet, besieged by such a setting, the old church that remembers the Bankside as a green and growing tract of open country, sits in absolute, unalterable peace—calmly contemplative of the rude reforms of time.

The interior is hushed and reverent. You have stepped out of the noisiest quarter into the quietest place in London; and the contrast comes over you as if you had been bathed in a water that is holy. The present nave is new; but it has been built so tastefully in accordance with the old Thirteenth Century design that you accept it as part and parcel of the ancient edifice. The windows of both the aisles have in recent years been filled with glass commemorating the long line of worthies who were familiars of the church—Chaucer, whose imaginary pilgrims started on their journey from a tavern in the immediate neighbourhood; Shakespeare, who buried his brother in the chancel; Spenser, Fletcher, Massinger, Beaumont, Edward Alleyn, Bunyan, who ministered

ST. SAVIOUR'S—SOUTHWARK

"You see it first from the southerly incline of London Bridge, looking westward over the four quaint gables of its Lady Chapel to the taller choir and the pinnacled tower over the crossing."
—Page 97.

in a neighbouring chapel; Henry Sacheverell, who was chaplain of St. Saviour's; the burly Doctor Johnson, and the well-beloved Goldsmith. From window after window the faces of these good and faithful servants look down upon you; and when the sun is bright you are smiled upon by England's Helicon.

In a recess of the north aisle of the nave stands the mediæval tomb of John Gower, who was buried here in 1402. If Chaucer was the first great poet in English literature, Gower was assuredly the first great bore; and yet you feel a kindly reverence for this old wielder of the windy, indefatigable pen as you see him lying calm beneath his gothic canopy, with his hands forever clasped in silent prayer. He is laid out like a king of men, with all his orders and his jewels hung about his neck; and he is quaintly pillowed on his own three massive volumes—the poem that he wrote in Latin, the poem that he wrote in French, and the poem that he wrote in English, as if to prove that he could be equally dull and interminable in all three languages. There he lies upon his learning and sleeps forever on his thoughts.

A chapel opening out of the north transept has recently been dedicated to the memory of John Harvard, who was baptized in St. Saviour's on November 29, 1607. Certain alumni of Harvard University have furnished it with a beautiful stained-glass window, the work of Mr. John La Farge, which was unveiled by a son of Harvard, the Honourable Joseph H. Choate.

The transepts, the choir, and especially the Lady Chapel, are very beautiful as architecture; but the main interest of the church inheres in its memories and in its quaint old

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tombs and monuments. There you may see pompous, self-complacent busts, and kneeling figures of Elizabethan burghers, and a Bishop of Winchester lying lone upon his sepulchre. But the two greatest men who are buried in the church have no monuments at all—except their names. Side by side they lie in the chancel; and carved upon adjacent slabs of the pavement, you may read the names of John Fletcher and Philip Massinger—names more eloquent than storied urn or animated bust. Beaumont, like the fine gentleman that he was, is laid away in the more aristocratic Abbey of Westminster, among the princes of poetry; and Fletcher, severed forever from his great collaborator, lies here more humbly by the side of his later sturdy friend. Here, beneath stones looked upon but rarely, lie the two men who collaborated with Shakespeare in that chronicle history of King Henry VIII which still is acted frequently in London. Night after night their words are repeated in a crowded theatre over the Thames; while here the scrubwomen in the choir kneel upon their names and never even wonder who they were. Beside Massinger and Fletcher is buried a young actor, lesser in eminence but greater in name, Edmund Shakespeare, the younger brother of the poet, who was laid here in 1607, dead at the early age of twenty-seven.

There in the choir of St. Saviour's, alone with these great and famous dead—for intruders come but rarely from the roaring world outside—you linger and dream upon the spacious times of great Elizabeth, when those who lie beneath the stones still walked above them, and the elder brother of that humble and forgotten actor walked and talked with them. The solemn silence of the church be-

comes palpable as a spiritual presence that listens and remembers. Consider all that is stored in that remembrance —all that this quiet church has seen and never will forget. Listen backward through three centuries (for time, in such a sanctuary, is but a moment) and the world's great age begins anew; the flag is flying from the Globe upon the Bankside, and the 'prentice boys are flocking past the church to hear the history of Hamlet, on which that bearded, portly man who was here a moment since has spent some good months of reflection. Listen deeply enough, and you will hear the gentle Fletcher and the doughty Massinger talking over a new collaboration. That tall giant who strode so imperially down the aisle was Alleyn, the actor, grown rich since the days when he created Tamburlaine, and now ready to endow a college. What a pity that he never could drag to church that wildest of all poets, the atheist Marlowe! . . .

But in this mood you may muse for hours in St. Saviour's; and when at last you withdraw into an interrupting world of taxicabs and tramcars, your heart turns backward and bestows a blessing upon Shakespeare's "little church around the corner."

X

ENGLISH BARS AND BAR-MAIDS

[1910]

X

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[1910]

The main reason for the difference in tone between the American saloon and the English public house is that the latter is hallowed by the familiar presence of women. In England the male bartender is practically unknown, and drinks are served almost universally by bar-maids. It is part of the inalienable birthright of women that they can always set the social tone of any business that they engage in, and without effort can compel the men with whom they come in contact to ascend or to descend to meet them on the level they have set. In New York, for instance, the same man who is flippant with the manicure lady is respectful to the woman usher in the opera house: instinctively, and without conscious consideration, he meets any business woman in the mood that she expects of him. To the women and not to the men is it granted to control the tone of any association between the sexes; bad women can debase a business, good women can uplift it, whereas the men with whom they are engaged would of themselves be powerless to lower or to elevate its tone. The way in which stenographers and shop-girls are treated depends on the stenographers and shop-girls much more than on the men with whom their occupation throws them. This, as everybody knows, is a

law of human nature. In England, custom has, for many generations, decreed that women shall control the tone of social drinking in the public bars; and it must be registered to the credit of the host of honourable women who have served as bar-maids that the tone of public drinking in England has been lifted to a level that has not been attained in any other country.

Of English bars and bar-maids I think that I may speak with a certain authority. In the course of four visits to England during the last decade, I have travelled over nearly all the country; I have slept in every county in England except two, and wandered from town to town with an insatiable interest; and since I care more about people than about any other feature of the panoramic world, I have rarely in my rambles let slip an opportunity to pass an evening in a public house and listen to the chat. To attempt a similar experience in America would be to discard it with disgust after three or four wasted evenings; but in the bars of England there is nearly always someone who is worthy to repay the task of seeking.

In Salisbury, for instance, there is a venerable hostelry that is called the Haunch of Venison. I do not hesitate to advertise it by its actual name: for it deserves and demands a visit from every American whose interest in the solitary contemplation of cathedral architecture has not made him forget that man is, first of all, a social being. If he will proceed almost any evening to the tiny smoking room upon the second floor (ducking his head beneath the mediæval rafters if he be above the middle height), and will join casually in the conversation of the company he meets there,

AN ENGLISH PUBLIC HOUSE

"It is just an ordinary bar that gleams a welcome to the lax-jointed labourer in the street."—Page 108.

he will discover something about the social possibilities of the public tavern that he has never learned at home. The company consists of small tradesmen of the town who have bolted up their shutters and gathered for a genial glass or two of "bitter" before resigning to the night. The talk deals earnestly with politics; protection and free trade are weighed logically one against the other, the measures of Mr. Lloyd George are discussed in the spirit more of the economist than of the partisan, the German menace is given its meed of attention, and the boy-scout movement is explained to the visitor from overseas. A round of drinks is ordered quietly; and the American is asked about the tariff and the growth of monopolies in his own country, the rate of wages and the cost of living, and the policies of Mr. Roosevelt. Then the visitor assumes the part of host, and shifts the talk to English architecture, touching upon old houses in the neighbourhood, the timber rafters of the room in which the company is gathered, the excavations at Old Sarum, the mood of Stonehenge underneath the setting sun, and the high-aspiring composition of the great cathedral. The proprietor of the tavern has looked in, spoken to nearly everybody by name, and offered another round of drinks with the compliments of the house. His charming wife joins the talk without embarrassment to any one, and becomes a sort of sister to the company. So the evening proceeds, until at the closing hour of eleven the company disperses with hand-shakings and good wishes for the night.

And remember that this is a public house, in the market-place of a little city, open to any one who wishes to spend twopence for a glass of ale. It is not a hotel; it is not aristo-

cratic; you will not find the name of it in Baedeker; it is just an ordinary bar that gleams a welcome to the lax-jointed labourer in the street. And the Haunch of Venison at Salisbury is not to be considered as unique, but is rather to be taken as typical of the English public house. In Canterbury, for example, there is a bar-room, the name of which I dare not mention lest I increase unduly the annual historic pilgrimage to that cathedral capital; but I am willing to say for the benefit of future American investigators that it may be entered either from the Parade or from the little square adjacent to the ancient gate of the cathedral precincts where the monument to Marlowe is erected. From the main entrance, in the Parade, you proceed through a bar-room to a cosy little smoking room beyond. There is a goodly company of young clerks and salesmen and minor officials of the town, interested in cricket, the growing of hops, the suffragette movement, the state of business, and the proposals to reform the House of Lords. But I have led you thither mainly that you may meet the daughter of the proprietor, who trips in with a tray of drinks and sandwiches. She is a glowing girl of seventeen, exceedingly alive, pretty and witty, jolly and jocose. She has rather an Italian look, with black eyes and black and billowy hair, and is dressed in the deep blue that Raphael loved. She knows everyone by name, except yourself, to whom she is speedily introduced. She greets you with a deft remark and a delicious gurgle of young laughter. When she leaves the room, it is as if Puck or Peter Pan had darted away to treetops. You recall the harmony of her nicely modulated speech and rich contralto laughter; and you are

not surprised when a young tradesman tells you that she has been studying singing for eight months in London and is already a favourite at local concerts. Again she romps into the little room, and the sense of life enlarges. She has brought her mother this time, who wishes to meet the newcomer to that nightly company; and at once you are reminded of Whitman's saying about women, "The young are beautiful; but the old are more beautiful than the young." The mother reveals the same abundance of essential energy, but softened, modulated, and matured. Her face is a sweet memory of years that were; it has lost that impudence of smiling and tossing the chin at what is yet to be. But then the daughter laughs again and overwhelms you with the joy of youth. And this is a place that you came upon by chance, seeking a whisky and soda! . . . How different, how wonderfully different, from the casual American saloon!

Of English bar-maids as a class I may say with certainty that they are almost uniformly chaste and—in the literal sense of that reverent adjective—respectable. Most of them are mature women—the average age, I should say, being rather above thirty than below it; many of them are married; they have seen much of men and know how to keep all sorts and conditions in their proper places and in the proper mood. Yet they exercise this high command without any affectation of austerity. They are easily affable and pleasantly familiar with all who come. Many of them are endowed with a genuine and contagious jollity—a merriment that is not assumed but which has arisen naturally from continuous converse with men of many humours. Their business introduces them to all the world; you step

in from the street and know them; they talk with you frankly from the start, without any preliminary dodges and retreatings; and yet no one abuses their easy familiarity. They are addressed with deference as "Miss"; and the casual loiterer from the street takes leave of them as if he were saying good-evening to a hostess. In my entire experience of English bars—setting aside only a few in the tragic East End of London—I have never heard an obscene story told. The conversation is necessarily refined, out of respect for the women who stand within hearing. Furthermore, because the bars are tended by women, there is an accepted rule in every public house of any standing that no drink shall ever be served to any customer who is at all intoxicated. A drunkard who would resent a refusal from a man accepts it without rudeness from a girl; and the result of this system is that you can ramble from one end of England to the other without finding a drunken person in a single bar.

But you will notice at once a tragic change if you cross the border into Scotland. In Scotland, bars are tended by men, as in America; and their social tone is immeasurably lower than that which is maintained in England. They are noisy and riotous; the common conversation is heavily underscored with profanities and obscenities; and drunkenness is so prevalent as to seem an habitual detail. Of course, other causes than the absence of bar-maids contribute to the foulness of the Scottish public houses. The austere and irksome law which makes it impossible to buy a drink after ten o'clock on any week-day evening and shuts up every bar in the country throughout the whole of the unbearable Scottish Sunday leads, naturally, to excessive

COURT-YARD OF AN ENGLISH INN

"This comfortable sense of homeliness you may find in many an English bar-maid."—Page 112.

and sodden drinking. It is tragic, on a Saturday evening in Edinburgh or Glasgow, to watch the hampered labourer and tradesman swilling liquor against the ticking of the clock in a rash attempt to swallow enough before the terminal hour of ten to carry them through the intolerable Sabbath. This is a dark picture, for which the fanatical austerity of the Scottish law must, in the main, be held responsible. It would be impossible to imagine English bar-maids in such a setting; and yet one cannot help wondering whether they might not alleviate that sodden atmosphere if they could be introduced into Scotland.

Thus far I have spoken only of the ordinary run of English bar-maids—the affable and wholesome type that you may encounter everywhere. But those who linger in the memory are the exceptional among them, who have made the bar-rooms over which they have presided memorable among the really worthy places which one has discovered in the world. The English bar-maid of the better class creates an atmosphere of hospitable homeliness—in the historic sense of that sweetly connotative word—which is a boon to everyone who comes within its influence. You have arrived in a certain city after dark, a stranger in a strange environment; you have wandered about the moon-silvered solitude of the hushed cathedral close, wondering at a majesty half glimpsed and half imagined; you have mingled with the chattering multitude in the market-place, profoundly lonely among many who knew and cared about each other; and at last, in a hospitable bar-room, you meet without formality a woman who is glad to talk with you and who mystically, for an easy half an hour, makes you feel at home. How

much of good may subtly be effected by a system that makes the homeless feel at home I leave the reader to imagine. Surely whatever soothes away the loneliness of the lonely may serve as a specific against the darker moods and vices, and even as a curative of crime.

To the untravelled American, who knows only the saloons of his own country, it may seem incredible that a common bar-room should ever feel like home. But there is a passage in Ruskin which poetically explains this possibility. In his second lecture in "Sesame and Lilies," he has been saying that a true woman, wherever she goes, carries with her the sense of home; and he adds, with a fine poetic flourish:—

> The stars only may be over her head; the glow-worm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot: but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far, for those who else were homeless.

Even if Ruskin in this passage, as all too often in his writings, may be accused of an excess of sentiment (one wonders, for instance, if he has ever actually slept upon "the night-cold grass" and arisen without rheumatism to write eloquent prose about it), we may yet discern beneath his ecstasy of phrasing the existence of a solid and indisputable truth. Merely to meet a woman who personifies the sense of homeliness is to feel yourself at home.

And this comfortable sense of homeliness you may find in many an English bar-maid. If you wish to investigate upon your own account, you might try Bolland's Restaurant in Chester, or the Yates Wine Cellar in Manchester, or the Nelson in Gloucester, or the Crown in Salisbury, or—but I

am not writing a guide-book to the bars of England; and, besides, every traveller is likely to fare best if he is left to his own devices.

Of all the English bar-maids I have known, one (as is but natural) recurs preëminent in my recollections. I think that I shall tell you her name, because so many poems echo in it; but I shall not tell you more precisely where she may be found than to say that she is one of many who serve drinks in the bar of one of the great hotels that are clustered near Trafalgar Square. I think it was I who discovered Eileen; but I introduced her very soon to several of my friends in London, and thereafter (forsaking the clubs to which we had formerly reverted for a talk and a nightcap after the theatre) we formed a habit of gathering at midnight to meet Eileen and to chat amicably within the range of her most hospitable smile until the bar closed at half past twelve. Assuredly, in that alien metropolis, she made us feel at home; and we escaped out of the cacophonous reverberation of the Strand into the quietude of her presence like men who relax to slippered ease within the halo of a hearth. "She had a weary little way with her that made you think of quiet, intimate things," as one of us said at the outset of one of the many sonnets she inspired. There is a sweet weariness that reminds you of lullabying mothers and the drooping eyelids of little children drifting into dreams; and this was, I think, the essence of her. Her voice was like the soothing of a cool hand upon a tired brow. She was very simple in her dark dress and dark hair; and there was something maiden-motherly in her smile. You saw her most clearly when her frank eyes looked directly at you and deepened

with a gleam of gentleness, and her lips parted tenderly to answer to the light within her eyes. Her hand, when she gave it to you in good-night, was like a memory of her voice; it had the same softness as of a whisper, it suggested the same sense of insuperable peace. I grew to know her very well, and could tell you her history if I would—how she was brought up in the country, one of many children; how, when her sisters married and she did not (because the men who came were none of them the right one), she had to earn her living and began as a bar-maid in a railway station in the Midlands; how she came up to London and grew to be (though this she won't admit) a light in her particular profession; of the long hours and the scanty leisure of her labour; of the compensation in the occasional people who come in and make an hour live with talk that is illumined and sincere, and in the occasional half-holiday rambles with a married sister over Hampstead Heath; of what is worth while in such a life and what is not; and of how it is that the eyes, though weary, can still sincerely smile with that glow as of a fireside, and the voice will evermore grow gentler through the years.

But my purpose is merely to help you to estimate her effect on us, who used to gather from the four quarters of London at the midnight hour for the sense of being near her; and, more generally, to estimate the effect of many women like Eileen, set in a position of publicity, upon the community at large. To gather for a social glass in such an atmosphere is to justify the best that poetry has claimed for drinking. As Browning's Andrea del Sarto stated, "So such things should be."

XI

CAMOENS DAY IN LISBON

[1912]

XI

CAMOENS DAY IN LISBON

[1912]

Portugal, as any one may see by looking at the map, is only a tiny country and seems to have been bitten, in some capricious mood of destiny, out of the peninsula of Spain; but the visitor to this rarely noticed nation will perceive at once that its independence is not accidental but natural. The little country is walled around with lofty mountains and overblown by breezes from the sea. Its climate is comparatively cool, and moist with frequent showers; and its homely hilltops and well-cultivated valleys offer an emphatic contrast to the arid, desolate, sun-parched plateaus of Spain. Life in Portugal lolls along with a kindlier easefulness than life in the hard, hot air of Spain; and it is not surprising that the people are more gentle-hearted, more easily amicable at the first acquaintance, more generously hospitable upon increase of intimacy.

Owing to their natural situation, the Portuguese have always been a nation of seafarers. It was their great navigator, Vasco da Gama, who discovered the passage to India around the Cape of Good Hope; it was they who colonized the deep-sea islands of the Azores and Madeira; and they founded a great empire (long since lost) in South America. A favourite motive in their architecture is to net a window

tracery out of twisted rope and to adorn an arch with other symbols of the sea.

This tiny nation of peasants and seafarers has given little to the arts. The Portuguese have no painting and no sculpture; and in architecture they have developed only a bastard style. This peculiar style, named "Manuelino" in honour of a king Emmanuel, is peculiar in its application of apparently Gothic decoration to a structure that is basically Renaissance. The result is incongruous but interesting; and at times, as in the monastery of Belém, it becomes fantastically beautiful. The noblest monuments in Portugal, however, like the supreme and unforgettable monastery at Batalha, were the work of foreign builders. Batalha, a splendid and phantasmagoric Gothic dream springing up by miracle amid unhinting hills, was designed by English architects imported for the purpose and belongs rather to the history of English Gothic than to the history of any native style.

But if the Portuguese have done but little in these arts, they have done still less in literature. The guide-books tell us that the present population of the country is about five million people, and that of these at least three quarters are illiterate. This large proportion of illiteracy must be ascribed mainly to the subsistence among these kindly and childish-hearted people of the influence of that mediæval church whose policy has ever been to keep the people ignorant in order that all their serious thinking may be done for them vicariously by the priests. The school-system of Portugal is merely elementary, and there is only one university in the entire country. Amid a nation where so few

THE WHITE-WALLED ATHENS OF COIMBRA

"Nested cloudlike on a hill above the winding river of Mondego."—Page 119.

are readers it is not surprising that scarcely any writers have arisen; but the very paucity of Portuguese literature as a whole confers an added lustre to the name of the one great Portuguese poet, Luiz de Camoens.

Camoens, in the world-wide galaxy of poets, must be ranked a little lower than the angels. He may be called the Tennyson of Portugal, if the reader will remember that the country has produced no Shakespeare and no Milton. Or he may be described, perhaps more accurately, as a lesser Tasso—a poet epic in intention but lyrical in mood.

This Luiz de Camoens was born in 1524. The rival towns of Lisbon and Coimbra dispute the honour of his birthplace; but it was, at any rate, in the white-walled Athens of Coimbra, nested cloudlike on a hill above the winding river of Mondego, that the future poet grounded himself in classical scholarship and studied the epics of Homer and Virgil. In his youth he wrote a series of exquisite love sonnets, several of which were translated into English by the late John Addington Symonds; and a little later his muse broadened to the composition of Petrarchan odes and a few poetic plays. Owing to an unfortunate love affair, he went to Africa, and lost his right eye in a skirmish with the Moors. Later, in 1553, he proceeded to India, already opened up to Portugal by the adventuring da Gama. He did not return to Lisbon until 1570. In 1572 he published his masterpiece, the national epic entitled "Os Lusiadas"; and in 1580 he died in poverty. He is buried in the south transept of the Hieronymite Convent of Belém, beside the great da Gama whom he celebrated in his epic.

It is mainly by this epic of "The Lusiad" that Camoens

is known to students of comparative literature in other lands. Like the Odyssey, it is an epic of the sea. The hero is Vasco da Gama, and the theme is the prowess of Portugal in opening an avenue to the illimitable east and doubling the map of the world. Innumerable national legends, like the tragic and pathetic tale of Inez de Castro, are woven into the dozen cantos of this monumental poem; and the epic as a whole sums up the contribution of Portugal to the progress of the world. Like Virgil, Camoens employs a conflict of the gods to tally with his sublunary action; and it seems a little incongruous to discover the Christian hero Vasco da Gama and the ancient goddess Venus engaging in the selfsame epic struggle. The poem is written in the *ottava rima* of Tasso—a measure that slips along very easily in the sibilant Portuguese language.

This language is peculiar in its qualities. Anybody with a general sense of the Romance languages and a fairly intimate acquaintance with either French or Spanish or Italian can easily read a Portuguese newspaper at sight; but the same person will find it almost impossible to understand the spoken language. It sounds foamy with *s's* that hiss continuously like the sea and *z's* that are pronounced like *sch* in German. There are nasal vowels reminding one of French and guttural consonants reminding one of the Teutonic languages. It is a language of butter and of hot potatoes. And yet, when spoken by an artist, it takes on a music of its own that is both strong and supple.

The Portuguese are very proud of their one poet—prouder than of any other of their heroes—and every year they celebrate his festival. In 1912 it happened that the writer

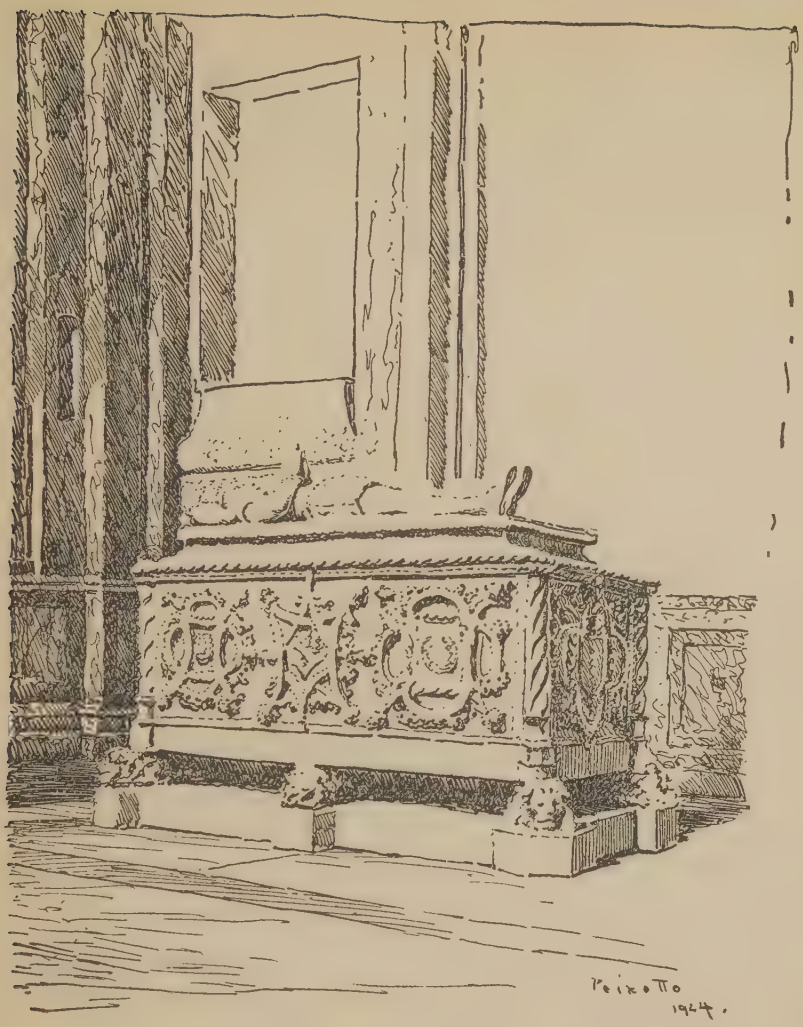
was present in Lisbon on Camoens Day, which fell on Monday, June 10. The entire population of this city of half a million tradesmen shut their shops, forbore their workaday concerns, and turned out to do honour to the author of "The Lusiad." Early in the day there was a procession of school children, and artists, and students, and members of learned societies, which marched to the Praça de Camoens, a shady little city square that is named in memory of the poet. In the midst of this square stands a colossal bronze statue of the one-eyed hero, holding in his right hand a drawn sword and in his left a copy of his masterpiece. He poses high upon a pedestal which is surrounded by eight other figures of famous Portuguese who have described or sung the great discoveries of their countrymen. Upon the conclusion of the procession, the little children of the schools strewed the base of the statue with myriad flowers, and the assembled crowd joined in singing the national anthem. All day the Praça de Camoens was packed with people, mostly of the poor and working class; and fakirs perched in portable pulpits did magic tricks and harangued the mob with witticisms. Few of the assembled populace could read or write; to them the name of Luiz de Camoens was nothing but a name; and yet they gathered in his square, and played about, and decked themselves with flowers, for the sole and all-sufficient reason that their country once had had a poet. And the American visitor wondered at the spectacle, remembering how the reading millions of New York and London had allowed the three hundredth anniversary of Milton's birth to pass unnoted and uncelebrated.

But the festival culminated in the evening with an exercise

of a more literary nature, which was held in the National Theatre. The Teatro Nacional is an institution modelled after the Comédie Française and housed in a building of considerable dignity situated in the most important square in Lisbon, the Praça de Dom Pedro Quarto. The gala performance was set for nine P. M.; and shortly before that hour the audience arrived.

The interior of the theatre (although it is much smaller) resembles that of the Théâtre Français. Behind the high-life orchestra stalls, there is a parterre of unreserved seats for poorer people; and the auditorium is circled by four or five galleries, each divided into boxes. The two lower tiers of boxes were occupied by the élite of Lisbon society, each box being filled with a family. Unattached young men were seated in the stalls; and most of these stood up and wore their hats until the music began.

At nine o'clock the playing of the national hymn—something in the nature of a softer and more sentimental version of "La Marseillaise"—gave notice of the entrance of the President of the Portuguese Republic; and the entire audience rose and bowed in the direction of the presidential box. This—the central box of the lowest tier—was formerly the royal box, but since the revolution it has been reserved for the new chief of the republic. This first President of Portugal, Dom Manuel d'Arriaga by name, is an elderly gentleman with scanty white hair and a well-chiselled face, quiet and serene in manner, with more suavity than force. He has not at all the aspect of the leader of a revolution. When interviewed between the acts, he seemed a dignified old



THE TOMB OF CAMOENS—BELÉM

"Camoens is buried in the south transept of the Hieronymite Convent of Belém, beside the great da Gama whom he celebrated in his epic."—Page 119.

gentleman with a kindly smile, but not at all an epoch-making personage. He wore simple evening dress with no decorations; but the cabinet ministers who sat with him in the presidential box were decked with many stars and orders. Most of them spoke French and talked in the usual manner of diplomatic society. Among those present were the Japanese minister and his wife, looking oddly outlandish in European clothes.

The performance opened with a recitation by the leading actor of the company, Senhor Felix do Amaral, of a stirring battle passage from "The Lusiad"; and it was in the long roll of this *ottava rima*, admirably read, that the Portuguese language first sounded musical to the ears of the visiting American. Next, there followed a very pretty ceremony. Half a dozen actresses of the company were disclosed upon the stage, standing in a semicircle, and dressed in mediæval peasant costumes. Each in turn advanced down the centre to the footlights and recited one of the love sonnets of Camoens, after which she resumed her station in the semicircle and was succeeded by the next reader. The poems were well read and sounded very musical; and they were listened to in eager quietude by the crowded theatre.

Subsequently to this lyric ceremony there were enacted two of Camoens's poetic plays, and a short piece by another early poet. The first of Camoens's contributions was "Os Amphitrioes," a version of the "Amphitrion" of Plautus; and the second, and concluding, piece was the "Auto d'el Rei Selenco." This play told the story of a melancholy prince who moped about the court clad in mourning and

refused to take an interest in life, and of the vain efforts of the king to cure the prince's malady by magic. Ultimately it is discovered that the cause of the young man's distemper is his hopeless love for a beautiful young woman of inferior station; and the king accomplishes the desired ending by ennobling the lovely maiden and bestowing her upon the prince.

The prince in this play was acted by Senhora Marina Rodrigues, who had also played the part of Mercury in "Os Amphitrioes." She is an actress of considerable talent and has been admirably trained. Her performance of the melancholy prince reminded the spectator repeatedly of Sarah Bernhardt's performance of Hamlet. Marina Rodrigues has the same blonde hair and clever profile and daring eyes, and she has caught a little of the great Sarah's trick of reading. She is also a versatile performer; and her rendition of Mercury's masquerade as the slave Sosia was rollicking with merriment.

These plays of Camoens are written in trochaic tetrameter, rhymed either in couplets or in alternating lines. It is the same measure that was written in Spanish by Lope de Vega and Calderon, except that the Spanish poets often substituted assonance for rhyme. It is a good measure for dramatic writing. It moves quickly and easily, and has an air of the colloquial; and the recurrence of the rhyme does not hammer on the ear, as is the case with the French Alexandrine measure.

The gala performance, which had begun at nine, lasted until after one A. M., with lengthy intermissions between the numbers. Then the carriages drove up, and the élite of Lis-

bon, led by the aged President of the Republic, rolled away to home and bed. And still, in the little square now dark and silent, the heroic figure of the poet stood aloft with drawn sword and war-worn visage, and clutched the copy of his poem, and looked down at the flowers at his feet.

XII

THE CLICK OF CASTANETS

[1912]

XII

THE CLICK OF CASTANETS

[1912]

The superiority that is usually assumed for Sevilla over other Spanish cities is mainly a matter of travellers' tradition, and has little foundation in fact. The capital of Andalucía is less beautiful than Granada, less picturesque than Segovia, less interesting than Toledo, less magnificent than Salamanca. But Sevilla does excel these other cities in one point at least—namely, that it is more alive than any of them. In nearly every Spanish province, the traveller is troubled by a sense that the entire population fell asleep a thousand years ago, and even now are merely stretching tired limbs and yawning; but this sense of stagnation is less oppressive in Andalucía, where the people do occasionally wake up long enough to demonstrate an interest in life.

But it is only by contrast with such graveyards of departed grandeur as Toledo that Sevilla may be spoken of as gay. It is not, like Naples, a light-hearted city—except for the single week of the Feria. The Andalucíans are more smiling than the aloof and ceremonious Castilians, but their comparative contentedness rarely glitters into merriment. In Naples everybody sings and dances and has a happy time; but in Sevilla everybody sits around and watches a few professional performers execute the native songs and dances.

There, in a sentence, is the difference between sunny Italy and sun-baked Spain.

But the songs and dances of Sevilla are worth watching. It is a famous fact that every good dancer in Spain, as well as every good bull fighter, is necessarily an Andalucían. The practitioners of both these arts who subsequently captivate the more fashionable public of Madrid have all received their early training in Sevilla. To anyone who has travelled through Estremadura and Castile it is not difficult to understand this; it would, indeed, be difficult to imagine a Castilian alert enough to dodge a bull or alive enough to dance.

But even to an Andalucían, dancing must be taught; and it is interesting to note that practically every Spanish dancer of any eminence is a graduate of the academy of Señor Otero of Sevilla. To visit this institution is therefore to see at its inception the liveliest feature of what little life there is in Spain.

It is not particularly difficult for the foreign visitor to secure an invitation to Otero's. Thus equipped, you step into a cab, and drive through the quarter of fashionable residences, past the Museum, and along the Calle San Vicente. You stop at number 67. This seems to be an ordinary private house, and there is nothing in the appearance of the front door to indicate that it will admit you to what is probably the most illustrious dancing school in the world. You ring the bell, and are led through a long, dark passage which ultimately broadens out into a sizable hallway, from which you turn into a little, oblong room no larger than the parlour of a miniature apartment. The boarded

AT OTERO'S IN SEVILLA

"Even hung upon a dummy, this gorgeous costume would look picturesque; but Otero's girls are better looking than their clothes. The costume of the men is cut in such a way as to accentuate their litheness."—Page 132.

floor springs and crackles under your feet. The bare walls are pasted over with pictures of bull-fights torn out of newspapers and illustrated weeklies. There are no windows, and the ceiling seems unusually low. This is, apparently, an anteroom; and, as you sit upon the wooden bench that runs around the walls, you wonder how long you are to wait before somebody leads you into the academy. Subsequently, to your consternation, you discover that this is the academy—this stuffy little oblong bandbox of a room and the adjacent hallway.

Presently Señor Otero's pupils troop in and proceed to practise. In age, they run all the way from five or six years to sixteen or seventeen. It takes ten years to make a dancer, and this fact is borne in upon you as you watch the very little children at their work. But possibly your eye may be attracted first by the five or six young women who are now prepared to graduate and to carry the fame of Otero through the world. They are very beautiful, these dancing girls; and this fact affords you an agreeable surprise, because —contrary to the reports of sentimental writers—very few of the women whom you see in Spain are beautiful. The reason is, of course, that only women of the working classes are allowed to go abroad in public through the streets, and that the women of the aristocracy are incarcerated in their houses. There is, in Spain, no middle class. The working women seem usually cramped with poverty or bent with labour. Five thousand of them are employed in the great tobacco factory of Sevilla, celebrated in romantic operas; but one looks in vain for a Carmen.

But Otero's dancing girls are exhilarating to view. Their

abundant black hair is heaped high upon the head, and the coiffure culminates in a tall tortoise-shell comb, over which is hung a black or white mantilla. A red carnation is plunged into the deep dark mass of hair behind the left ear. A silken shawl, embroidered with many-coloured figures, is drawn around the shoulders and draped across the bust, and the heavy swinging skirt is cut like an inverted tiger lily. Even hung upon a dummy, this gorgeous costume would look picturesque; but Otero's girls are better looking than their clothes. The costume of the men is cut in such a way as to accentuate their litheness. The trousers are tight, and the close-fitting velveteen jacket is cut short at a high waist line.

What we call "round" dances are unknown in Spain. Either the performers dance singly, or else they dance to each other, so to speak, in couples or quartets. They practise a large repertory, but all their dances are identical in type. This type is clearly indicative of the mixed origin of the Andalucían population. In ancestry they are partly Spanish and partly Moorish, and their dances reveal an interesting admixture of Oriental and Occidental pantomime. To the rhythmic ventral oscillations of the Arabs they have added the agile exercise of legs and arms that is habitual in European dancing. The legs are never kicked aloft, but the feet maintain a continual clatter on the boards, which is punctuated with emphatic stampings; and the movements of the body and the arms are timed to the rhythm thus noisily insisted on.

The music of these dances is furnished by two instruments, the castanet and the guitar. Of these the toneless

castanet, clicking continually between the nimble fingers of the dancers, is decidedly the more important. It establishes the rhythm, and, accompanied only by the unemphatic guitar, seems really to convey the melody. And this fact defines the difference between the music of the Andalucíans and that of other peoples to whom music is a second nature,—the Neapolitans, for instance. Rhythm is its dominant detail. The Italian ear insists on melody; but the Spanish ear is satisfied with a hollow clatter, provided only that the beat be sharply emphasized. And the rhythm of the Andalucíans is absolutely regular. The Neapolitans delight in moody modulations in the tempo, expressive of the sentiment of the individual performer; but the Sevillans eschew these variations and insist upon a rhythm as regular as the ticking of a clock.

This instinct is so strong in the Andalucían population that, whenever they applaud a performer in a theatre, they naturally clap their hands in a regular rhythm that reverberates throughout the audience. This rhythm consists of three swift beats followed by two slow beats—an anapest followed by a spondee—the rhythm of the English phrase, "In the night, stars shine." This, also, is the dominant rhythm of the famous dance entitled the "tango," which, it is needless to say, bears no resemblance to the Argentine gyration which has borrowed its name.

In the dancing at Otero's there is a fire and a dash that is exceedingly exhilarating. There is, perhaps, more zest than grace in the performances, but the essential element of life is there—life with all its keenness and its thrill.

It is this same sense of the sharp taste and stimulating

tang of life that one derives from the popular Sevillan songs. These also are punctuated with the click of castanets and accompanied by the monotonous guitar. There is no singing in the streets, such as you will hear in Naples; but there is music in the cafés that line the ambulant and narrow lane that is quaintly called the Sierpes, and you will find both songs and dances in the amusing but scarcely reputable Café de Novedades. In this establishment you sit at a little marble-topped table and sip *aguardiente*—the literal meaning of this word is "fire water"—in the midst of a crowd of lax-jointed labourers and their sluggishly amiable wives, while a continuous performance takes place upon a tiny stage that projects into the middle of the room. Half a dozen dancers sit upon this platform, and, as each of them performs in turn, the others accompany the dance with noisy clappings of their hands. The decorous Baedeker opines that the Café de Novedades is "not at all adapted to ladies"; but many American women, under proper escort, have visited this cabaret without discovering anything offensive to the taste.

But to hear the Andalucían songs at their best one must visit a music hall. It was in a popular and unpretentious theatre of this class that I discovered the beautiful La Goya. Until her appearance on the stage, the entertainment had resembled an ordinary vaudeville show in a small American town. The usual motion pictures had been followed by a commonplace travelling mesmerist who talked loud and long about his own attainments; but then La Goya came.

It is doubtless merely an accident that she bears the name of the greatest of modern Spanish painters; but she reminds

one of the types that he has rendered in those designs for royal tapestries that are hung in the dingy basement of the Prado. Like Goya's women, she is very much alive. The sparkle of her eyes becomes a sparkle of her entire personality when she begins to sing and dance. She renders a series of popular ballads, singing and dancing simultaneously. After each number she quickly changes her costume and reappears in another character. She is an admirable actress. Even though it is difficult to follow the gypsy-Spanish dialect in which most of the Sevillan songs are written, La Goya gives a quick and vivid sense of the character she is depicting. Her voice, like that of all the Andalucîans, is somewhat sharp and strident; but she sings with an admirable zest and rhythm and a contagious fire of spirit. Her dancing is the most captivating I have seen in Spain—it is so buoyant, so agile, so athletic. She has her seasons in Madrid, where you will see her favourite songs displayed, with her picture on the cover, in the windows of the best music shops; but it is at Sevilla that she should be seen and heard, to the accompaniment of the rhythmic plaudits of an audience of her own people.

Whenever I remember Madrid, I think first of Velasquez; whenever I remember Toledo, I think first of El Greco; but whenever I remember Sevilla, I think first—not of Murillo—but of the unforgettable La Goya singing and dancing the ballad of "Ven y ven." The greatest thing in life is life; and I know of few artists who convey so keen a sense of life as this dark-eyed, agile singer of the Spanish music halls.

XIII

THE ROMAN THEATRE AT ORANGE

[1912]

XIII

THE ROMAN THEATRE AT ORANGE

[1912]

THE seeker for the grandeur that was Rome will find fewer satisfying monuments of the ancient empire in the capital itself than in the subsidiary cities of its colonies. After the ancient Romans had gone forth to conquer, they remained to colonize. When they had annexed another province to the known and habitable world, they delighted in rearing, on the erstwhile alien soil, monuments massive out of all proportion to the native population, in order to impose upon the conquered peoples a grandiloquent sense of the majesty of the imperial metropolis. Thus they carried the Forum with them as they marched, and sowed the world with little Romes.

The Eternal City itself has suffered sadly from the ravages of time. As the heart of the entire empire, it was the target for barbarian attacks, and it was battered and pillaged by many marauders who did not pause to sack the minor cities of the provinces. Then, in the Middle Ages, as the seat of Christianity, its ancient monuments were used as quarries by builders who thought that they did honour to their God by destroying pagan temples to steal stones for their basilicas. To-day the ruins of the Roman metropolis are scattered amid a wearying wilderness of Renaissance churches

and modern streets that ape the gaiety of Paris. It is not there that you will find the grandeur that was Rome.

But you will find it far away, in little, unexpected places —in Verona, where the unruined Roman amphitheatre stands up young amid the mediæval city of Can Grande della Scala—in Segovia in Spain, where, over half a mile of valley, the ancient aqueduct rolls onward with its double tier of arches and mocks the trivial and impudent to-day—or, best of all, in Pompeii, where the ashes of the great eruption preserved the town through seventeen centuries of merciful oblivion.

No other of the Roman colonies has kept intact so many of its ancient monuments as the singing and unstrenuous country of Provence. Here, within a radius of a hundred miles, are nearly half a dozen Roman cities. Arles, for instance, will serve admirably for a latter-day pilgrimage to Rome. It contains an amphitheatre that is nearly as complete as that at Verona, a considerable segment of its Roman ramparts, some fragments of a forum, and the ruins of a palace of Constantine the Great. There is also an ancient theatre in Arles; but this was pillaged as a quarry for the neighbouring Christian church of Saint Trophime, and has sunken since into dilapidation. Even in its present state, however, it offers interesting materials to students of the history of the stage.

There are fewer Roman remains at the neighbouring city of Nîmes, but these are in themselves of more importance than any to be seen at Arles. A few miles to the north of Nîmes, the great aqueduct now named the Pont du Gard spans the valley of a little river, rearing in three tall and

graceful tiers a bridge from nothing on to nothing. In Nîmes itself there are a Roman military tower, some interesting fragments of an ancient bath, and an amphitheatre more perfectly preserved than any other in the world. This summer it housed a motion picture show, and a guard at the gate sold tickets to a line of waiting people who seemed unaware of any incongruity.

But the great surprise of Nîmes is of another order. It should be said that the city itself is one of the dullest and least picturesque that can be found in France. It is very modern in its aspect, and clangorous with tramcars. Even its churches date from the latter half of the Nineteenth Century and are monuments of ugliness, and its boulevards are depressing in their evident attempt to look like those of modern Paris. But unexpectedly you come around a corner: and then . . . !

The sudden vista of the tiny temple that stands lonely in a little square is a sight that brings tears into the eyes. If Benvenuto Cellini had made a jewel-box for giants, it is thus he would have carved it. Nothing could be more perfectly proportioned than this temple to a now forgotten god, nothing more exquisite than the carving of its Corinthian capitals, nothing more delicate than the lace-like decoration of its cornice. And then this perfect atom of antiquity is such a little thing. . . . It is so pure, and so unspotted from the world. It is so lonely, too. . . . The Doric temple at Pæstum knows no loneliness like this, though it stands amid a desolate marsh; for it has a friendly temple upon either hand, and hearkens ever to the whisper of the sea, which is the voice of its remembered deity, Poseidon. But

the maiden-minded little shrine of Nîmes stands friendless amid tramways and modern citizens who pass it on their daily business and never turn their eyes as they drift by. In the midst of a shuffling city, it is sunk in solitude. That is, perhaps, the reason why it wears a wistful air—this sweetest of all buildings in the world.

The neighbouring city of Orange contains two Roman monuments—a well-preserved triumphal arch and the most interesting ancient theatre still extant. To students of the history of the stage, the Roman theatre at Orange is even more interesting than the theatre of Dionysus at Athens, because it is very much better preserved and because it is still regularly employed for performances of classic plays. It is, therefore, highly desirable that those who care about the ancient drama should make a pilgrimage in summer to Orange.

Orange was the *Arausio Secundanorum* of Julius Cæsar. It is situated (as the train flies) about an hour north from Avignon and about two hours north from Nîmes and Arles. It is now a little town with only ten thousand inhabitants, but it must have been a more considerable city under the Cæsars, since the theatre is capable of accommodating more than seven thousand people. One can hardly imagine an entire community seated in a single theatre, with no one left at home to mind the babies. Orange to-day (except for its two Roman relics) is a much more modern-looking town than Avignon. It seems, besides, to have small reason for existence. It basks and slumbers in the middle of a fertile but unfeatured plain; and from the single hill that dominates it, one looks afar to mountains on the east and west and

wonders why it is that all Orange does not arise and wander over the hills and far away.

Bestriding a road that enters this inexplicable town you discover a triumphal arch that rivals, both in beauty and in preservation, the two famous arches of the Roman Forum. It is a glorious Corinthian agglomeration of three arches, adorned with bas-reliefs illustrative of close encounters between Gauls and Romans, and with trophies of captured arms and chained barbarians. It was apparently erected in A. D. 21, to commemorate the victory of the legions of Tiberius over Sacrovir, the chieftain of the Ædui. There it has stood for nineteen centuries, taking sun and rain, and calling time the winking of an eye.

From this ancient arch the traveller wanders through the dozing modern town, in search of the Roman theatre, and suddenly comes upon it unawares. The first detail that meets the eyes is an overwhelming wall that served at once as the back of the stage and the façade of the general edifice. It is 340 feet long, 118 feet high, and 13 feet thick. It is destitute of ornament, save for an open arcade in the lower story, a blind arcade in the third story, and two rows of crockets, in the fourth and fifth stories, which were designed apparently to support poles for flags or awnings. This sun-browned façade is so imposing in its mere dimensions that, devoid of decoration though it is, it deserves the dictum of Louis XIV (a monarch not without a touch of taste) that it was "the most beautiful wall in his kingdom."

To see the rest of the exterior it is necessary to climb a hill; for this theatre, like the theatre of Dionysus at Athens, is carved out of a hillside. The ancient theatre builders,

instead of digging a hole in the ground, as they do in modern London, or erecting an edifice with four walls, as we do in present-day New York, merely chiselled a hill to the desired semicircle, and then built a stage, with a huge rear wall, across the diameter of their ground plan. Thereby they moulded a natural landscape into what may be called one half of a hollow drum, in which the human voice would easily reverberate, and the movements of the actors and the chorus could be seen by half a city.

At Orange there is a steep and not unlofty hill to climb, which, in the Middle Ages, was crowned by the castle of those Princes of Orange who wisely ruled the Netherlands. This castle was destroyed in 1673 by order of Louis XIV, and only the foundations now remain to splinter the hummocks of the soil. To-day the hill is surmounted by an heroic statue of the Virgin Mary, erected in the Nineteenth Century, and looking down, devoid of comprehension, into the interior of the enormous pagan theatre. The theatre dates from the second century A. D., before the Christian religion had ever been heard of in this distant country of Provence; and the statue of the Virgin looks a little ill at ease, as if she wondered what this mighty edifice might mean. Beneath her feet the hillside is carved into concentric semicircles, rising and widening, tier above tier. These are divided into three distinct sections—the lowest, apparently, for patricians, the middle for plebeians, and the uppermost for slaves. The semicircular orchestra (by which is meant the space left open and level in the middle of the ground plan) could easily accommodate a choral evolution of more than a hundred supernumeraries; and the stage itself is so

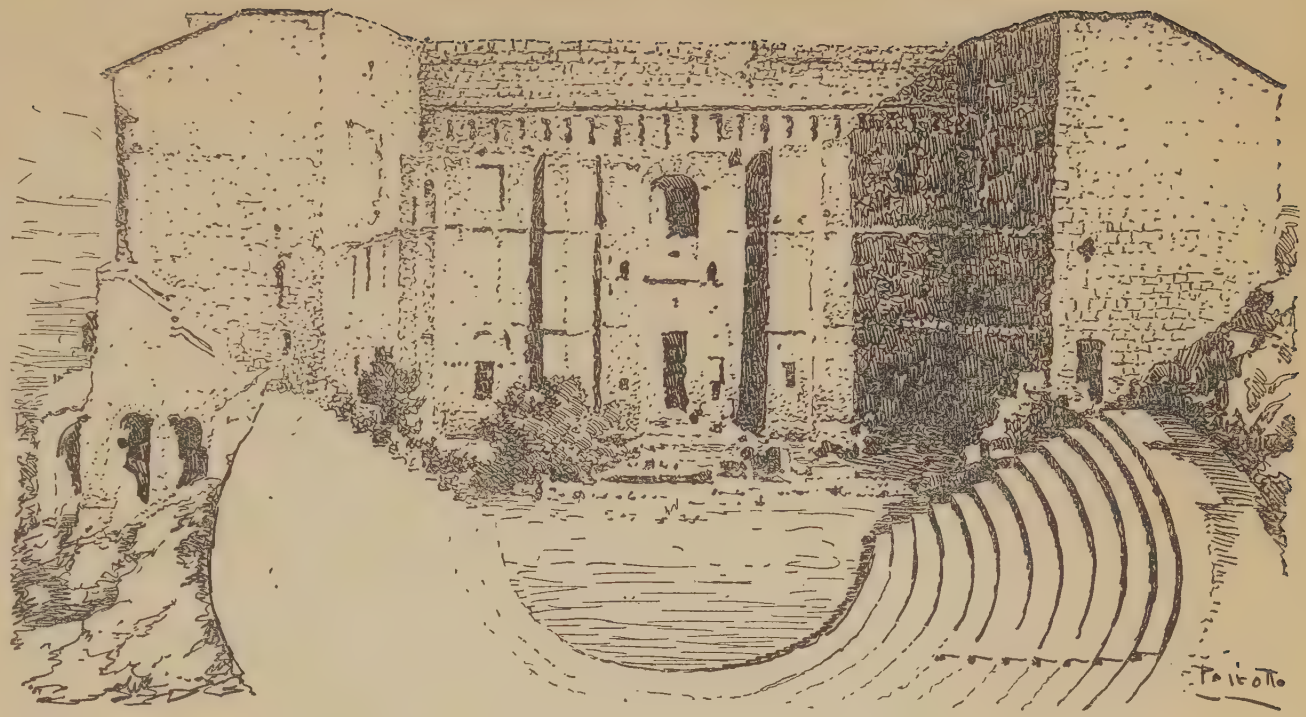
wide (three hundred feet at least) that it seems as if it must have dwarfed the movements of the three actors to which ancient tragedy was limited. The actual flooring of the stage is ruined, but the gigantic rear wall remains intact, except for its architectural adornments.

A careful examination of this rear wall shows that it must have supported a wooden roof to shade the stage. There is, however, no indication that the auditorium was ever roofed; although, as has been said already, there is architectural evidence that an awning might have been drawn over the entire theatre on days when the southern sun was oppressively powerful. The wall is pierced by three great doors which give upon the stage. In such a comedy as the "Captivi" of Plautus, these were probably employed to indicate the entrances to the houses of the leading characters; and in such a tragedy as "King Œdipus," the central and largest door might have been imagined as the portal of the palace of the king, and one of the other doors as the portico of the adjacent temple. In the third story, directly over the central door, there is a deep recess. Studious architects have inferred that it must have held a monumental statue; but for the critic of the drama it remains to suggest that it might have been used by a performer enacting the part of "a god from the machine."

Descending from the hillside and entering the interior of this gigantic theatre, the student of the drama will find still more to interest him. The extraordinary width of the stage becomes even more embarrassing to the critic whose sense of acting has been drawn from modern models; but, from front to back, the stage is distinctly less deep than those

that we employ to-day. The orchestra can hardly have been sunk more than from four to six feet below the level of the stage, so that the colloquies between the actors and the chorus must have seemed easy and natural. From a series of experiments conducted by the writer with the aid of several other people seated in various sections of the auditorium, it became evident that the acoustic properties of this ancient theatre were extraordinary. In order to be heard distinctly by even the farthest removed of his seven thousand auditors, it was not necessary for the ancient actor to speak with any greater volume of voice than is commonly employed, in a lecture room of the ordinary size, by a professor at Columbia University. On the other hand, it became evident that even an exaggerated alteration of facial expression could not be perceived in so large a theatre, and that little, subtle gestures of the hands could not be noticed. This would seem to be a final justification for the use of facial masks and stilted boots upon the ancient stage. But, to return to the more important point, the ease with which a speaker may be heard remains incredible. Standing on the stage and looking far up the hillside to a person whose face he can scarcely distinguish, the investigator may make himself distinctly understood without any appreciable effort of the voice.

This ancient theatre has passed through many vicissitudes between the date of its erection and the present day. Originally employed for the production of Greek and Latin tragedies, it was later used to house successively the decadent farces of the falling days of Rome, then pantomimes, and ultimately the exhibitions of mediæval acrobats, *jongleurs*,



THE ROMAN THEATRE AT ORANGE

"The ancient theatre builders merely chiselled a hill to the desired semicircle, and then built a stage, with a huge rear wall, across the diameter of their ground plan."—Page 144.

and of educated animals. Still later, it became a mediæval fortress; and early in the Nineteenth Century it enclosed within the area of its encircling walls a little village of huddled houses. About 1850 the architect Caristie cleaned it out and commenced to restore it as a national monument. In 1869 MM.Félix Ripert and Antony Réal conceived the project of offering a classical performance in the ancient edifice; and this initial enterprise met with such success that other performances were given in 1874, 1886, 1894, and 1897. Since 1899 the Comédie Française and the Opéra have given classical productions every summer in the Roman theatre of Orange.

On the occasion of these performances, a temporary wooden stage is erected in the centre of the space originally occupied by the Roman stage. The wide spaces which remain on either hand are left vacant. Also, the ancient orchestra is not employed in the performance, but is filled with rows of chairs to accommodate spectators, like the stalls in a modern theatre. The musicians, likewise, as in a theatre of to-day, sit below the stage and in front of the chairs in the orchestra. The performances are given at night, and the stage is lighted by calciums which are screened behind several natural trees that have grown up in the ruin during the desultory course of time. The general effect of these latter-day performances is not at all like that which was attempted in the ancient tragedies; and yet the productions are impressive in themselves, and they appeal to the imagination by reawakening the ancient edifice to life after seventeen centuries of sleep.

XIV

THE HAPPY ISLES

[1922]

XIV

THE HAPPY ISLES

[1922]

THE very name of Honolulu is haunting and alluring, like a lullaby; and its curious position on the map makes it a Mecca for wanderers who, like Ulysses, desire to see men and cities before they grow too old. It is almost exactly antipodal to the capitals of Europe. Indeed, if the Hawaiian Islands should drag their anchors and drift only twenty degrees westward and southward over the empty ocean and then moor themselves forever, they would float at the only point upon the globe where there is neither east nor west nor north nor south. Honolulu is the hub of the Pacific, with sea lanes radiating spoke-like to the harbours of four continents; yet it is more than two thousand miles away from the nearest mainland port. It is the most Oriental of Occidental cities, the most Occidental of Oriental; and, since it is so distant from the customary centres of human habitation, the eyes of weary men turn toward it wistfully as a haven of escape from the habitual. Most people go there mainly for the purpose of getting away from whatever place they happen to have started from. Some go desperately, seeking nothing but a drastic change; others more deliberately, seeking adventure, seeking a lost loveliness, or seeking peace. But whatever they have wished for, they will mystically find;

for Honolulu is all things to all men, holding up a magic mirror to their souls that returns to them an image of whatever they have most desired.

On the little patch of sand at Waikiki that is known to the initiated as the Children's Beach, you may meet an elderly native of New York. In 1887, he was sailing home from China; and, when his ship touched at Honolulu for a day, he stepped ashore to have his laundry done. . . . So he tells you, with a playful smile; and he never seems to be in any hurry to get his laundry back. . . . And you soon perceive that he has ample reason for his patience; for, though Honolulu is only a little city, seated on a tiny island half the world away from everywhere, it is so rich in interest and so infinite in its variety that it offers a response to every mood. The climate is impeccable, the landscape is unimaginably lovely; but the bounties of nature would soon afflict the spirit with satiety if they were not supplemented by the rarer bounties of human nature. Man cannot live by scenery alone, still less by climate: he must live by active interchange of spiritual currency with other men. Sociability is the flower of living, as poetry is the flower of language. The hermit who retires to his cell secedes from common intercourse only to make himself more sociable with his own soul and with his God; and, since cells are scarce and hermits rare, the mechanism of society has been invented as a plan for making possible an interchange between men and men of the insistent instinct of sociability. And Honolulu—surprisingly enough—is the most sociable city that I have ever visited.

Therefore, instead of penning an unnecessary testimonial

to the perfect climate of the Paradise of the Pacific or competing with the eloquence of those alluring little booklets which are issued by the tourist agencies and which describe with words and pictures the luxuriant vegetation, the colourful flowers, the huge mountains, the coral-sheltered seas, the wide vistas, the volcanic wonders, the fantastically painted fishes, the free-haunched hula girls, the coconut groves, the rice swamps, the sugar and pineapple plantations, the motor roads, the jungles, the military camps, the naval harbours, the surf-board riding of the Polynesian youths, the deep-sea fishing of the Japanese sampans, or the constant coming and going of great ships flying all the flags of the world—I shall devote this little essay to an endeavour to describe the social life of Honolulu, both in the broad and in the narrow sense.

For Honolulu, which has eighty thousand inhabitants or thereabouts, is the only city I have ever lived in, excepting Copenhagen, in which everybody appears to be happy and associates on terms of unimpeded human intercourse with everybody else. In these two cities, which stand unique in my experience, there is no poverty, no unemployment, no misery, no want; there is a place for everyone, and everyone is happy in his place and not envious of others. In the Danish capital, this astonishing phenomenon of general and common happiness may be explained by the homogeneity of the populace, issued cleanly from a single race whose cheeks have been salted for centuries by winds from a stinging northern sea, and living in a genuinely democratic comity within the limits of a small city in a tiny kingdom neutralized, not only by treaties, but also by geographical position, from the roaring and ruinous maelstrom of Euro-

pean politics. But the happiness of Honolulu has no reference to the rare phenomenon of racial homogeneity. It is not a melting pot; but it is a multicoloured tapestry in which many different races are harmoniously interwoven. Of all the communities that fly the flag of the United States, it is at once the most outlandish and one of the most thoroughly American. It is apart from our homeland and yet a part of it. In population, it is preponderantly Asiatic; but in civilization, it is insistently New England.

Statistics, which are usually dull, are peculiarly interesting in respect to the multi-racial population of the Hawaiian Islands. In 1921, there were approximately a quarter of a million people living on the eight islands of the group. Of these 250,000, nearly one half—or 115,000—were Japanese in race; 23,000 were Chinese; 20,000 were pure Polynesian; and 18,000 were half Hawaiian, by a crossing of the brown race with the yellow or the white. The Japanese never intermarry with any other stock; but intermarriages between Chinese and Hawaiian are frequent, and the resultant half-breed stock is physically fine and mentally alert. In 1921, there were 24,000 recently imported Filipinos in the islands, 5,000 Koreans, 25,000 Portuguese (imported half a century ago from the Azores and Madeira), 1,000 Spaniards, and 38,000 *haoles*, or Anglo-Saxon people like ourselves. Thus it will be seen that the *haoles*, who constitute the ruling class, politically, economically, and socially, are in a very small minority and are out-numbered three to one by the Japanese alone. Furthermore, the Japanese are by far the most prolific of the races, rearing families that average from six to eight children; and it is apparent that, within another

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"The coral-sheltered seas."—Page 153.

generation, the population of the Hawaiian Islands will be overwhelmingly Asiatic. Yet, among the *haoles* of Honolulu, I found none of the hysterical fear and hatred of the Japanese that is so emphatically apparent in California. There is no rivalry between the races, because their pursuits are different, and, in these different pursuits, neither race desires to supplant the other. The Japanese leave the political and economic conduct of the islands entirely to the *haoles*, whom they recognize as the ruling class; they have no desire to engage in politics or in the conduct of big business. They do not wish to master, but to serve. They toil on the plantations, live frugally, and earn and save good money. They keep little shops and conduct them with extraordinary cleanliness and courtesy. They have chosen their own place in the social order; they do their own work well and, therefore, happily; and they have no ambition to oust the white man from his more difficult and more responsible task of governing the country.

Yet, the question must, of course, suggest itself immediately:—How can these many men of many races manage to get along together in complete good will, even in a region where the climate is perfect, where the scenery is glorious, and where the primal necessities of life are provided, without the economic need of purchase, by the superabundant bounties of nature in its highest mood of prodigal effusion?

The answer is that they share with common reverence a common memory, and that the sane basis for their communal pursuit of happiness has been slowly broadened down from precedent to precedent. For Honolulu is not an upstart city (like Los Angeles, for instance); it is a city with a

venerable past. Virgil bestowed an accolade upon the perfect tense when he penned that pregnant phrase, "We have been Trojans"; and Honolulu is not merely a city that is, but also a city that has been. A century ago, the scions of the great Kamehameha were recognized as right royal by the crowned heads of Europe; and, in Washington Place, the official residence of the Governor, you may see a silver service that was sent out as a gift to the kingdom of Hawaii by Louis Philippe of France. Honolulu is a great city, because it has been great; it is a citadel of the conservative, because it has a history to conserve. And its tapestry of multi-racial interweaving has become a mellow work of art, because of the persistent dominance of a single soul throughout the slow and gradual process of composition at the loom.

And this single, dominating soul has been the soul of old New England, shorn of its austerity, but unforgetful of its love of shadows and of silence, its yearning for studious, expansive, and imaginative leisure, its passion for peace. A white house overshadowed by sun-sifting trees, with God's own green around it and a gathering of great books within it, and leisure under lamplight, and quiet converse with tall spirits when the night is down: this is what New England means to many of us who have flung afar the steepled hats and straitened ways of the old Puritans. And the essence of New England has been conserved in Honolulu, nearly half the world away, as an example for civilization and a glory to mankind.

In 1820, half a dozen families set sail from Massachusetts on a perilous, long voyage round the Horn for the purpose

of carrying the Word of God to the heathen inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands. The smiling Polynesians were not averse to visitors: they were more than hospitable; they were positively generous. And the thrifty New Englanders experienced no difficulty in exchanging the Word of God for authenticated title deeds to landed property. The missionaries from Massachusetts, soon possessed of the best lands, settled down in the Hawaiian Islands and remained; and the descendants of these old New England families still own and operate the eight islands of the group. Each of the original half-dozen missionary families started out with six or eight children. Intermarriages occurred immediately and were continued in succeeding generations, so that the original stock has now been expanded to more than a thousand people. In the best society of Honolulu, everybody is at least a second cousin to everybody else, first names are always interchanged in greeting, and the visitor soon perceives that he has been received into a circle which, though numerically large, is in reality a family gathering.

The missionaries of 1820, though shrewd and thrifty, could scarcely have foreseen the full advantage of their bargain in exchanging the Word of God for ownership of the islands; for, in recent years, the land has been made extraordinarily productive, especially in pineapples and in sugar cane. The minds of the old New Englanders were not ambitious for riches in this world; yet their descendants are extremely rich. When the price of raw sugar goes up half a cent in the markets of the world, all of the big folk in Honolulu give a party; when it goes up a full cent or more, everybody takes a trip to London and to Paris. Yet, this

large family of a thousand second cousins, who greet each other by their Christian names, never seem aware of any anachronism in their feudal and mediæval mastery of the islands. They have been wealthy for so long that they no longer think of money: there is nothing of the *nouveau riche* about them: they think of service, of responsibility, and of the duty that inheres in the fatherhood of leisure to be beneficent toward the children of toil.

In economic pattern, the territory of Hawaii is an oligarchy. Everything is owned and run by a few aristocrats who are known to all the people as George or Jim or Walter or Alfred. But, precisely because Honolulu is, actually and ancestrally, the most aristocratic of American cities, it is also, in its manners, the most democratic. *Noblesse oblige;* and the obligation to be cordial is observed most naturally in those rare regions where nobility is recognized. In the water that comes creaming over the coral reef at Waikiki, you go swimming and diving and canoeing and surf-board riding with your Japanese waiter, your Chinese chamber servant, and your Polynesian boy; there are no social distinctions in the sea, and everybody yields preëminence to the purple-skinned Kahanamokus because they are the ablest swimmers on the beach. Yet, an hour later, at luncheon or at dinner, the Japanese youth who has recently been diving with you, or the Hawaiian boy who has recently shared with you the perilous exercise of paddling an outrigger canoe, becomes once more the perfect servant, silent, efficient, uncommunicative, and forces you by sheer example to become once more the perfect gentleman. The little boys of the *haole* families that have been millionaires for a century

patter barefooted on their daily course to school and do not even own a pair of shoes; and the yellow and brown retainers of the feudal houses share in all the luxuries of the aristocracy that they loyally support.

Before you go to Honolulu, you ought, if possible, to know at least one member of the local aristocracy. In that event, you will know everybody in a fortnight; for social gatherings are frequent, and you will easily be passed about from one hostess to another wherever anything is happening. You will meet Cousin This and Cousin That and will be welcomed into a large and genial family where all the boys have been sent home to New England to be educated at Harvard or at Yale (they have never, for convenience, been deposited in the half-way universities at Berkeley or at Palo Alto). Back in the early days of California, the forty-niners of San Francisco used to send their daughters out in sailing ships to be educated at the Kamehameha Schools in Honolulu; for the island capital was already a citadel of civilization when San Francisco was nothing but a mining camp and when the present site of Los Angeles was an empty and unirrigated desert.

On my own particular map of the world, the Hawaiian Islands, before I ever hoped to see them, had been tentatively named the Happy Isles, for merely literary reasons dating backward to the Odyssey; but, now that I have lived in Honolulu, the name has been made permanent, for reasons that are literal and actual.

I don't know why they call the western exit from this continent the Golden Gate; for, in all the days that I have climbed the hills of San Francisco, it has been golden but a

single hour. Ordinarily, a heavy fog rolls inward from the Farralones, shrouding Tamalpais as with a Klansman's hood and curtaining the exodus from San Francisco harbour; and, as my steamer plunged into this palpable, impenetrable mist, I repeated over to myself those well-remembered lines from Tennyson's "Ulysses":—

> 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
> Push off, and sitting well in order smite
> The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
> To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
> Of all the western stars, until I die.
> It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
> And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.

Five mornings later, when the cloud-collecting mountains of Oahu were heaved upward from the sea, painted in every imaginable shade of green and gray and red and yellow, I knew at a glance that I had touched the Happy Isles; and, when the ship was warped into Honolulu harbour and Will Lewers met me on the dock and garlanded my neck with *leis*, I forgot to call him Billy and greeted this old friend of other days with the unexpected salutation, "Hail, Achilles!" I was soon at home in a comfortable bungalow in the cocoanut grove of Halekulani, beside the sea at Waikiki, enjoying to the full the suavity of life as it is lived in Honolulu. Suave is the only adjective that fits the experience precisely; and, recalling the sonnets of Petrarch, I should prefer to write the word in its Italian form—*soave*—so that it would breathe with the soft whisper of a little breeze at twilight. *Soave* fits the air of Honolulu, which feels like velvet to the

cheek; it fits the water of Waikiki, which feels like velvet to the limbs; it fits the people of Hawaii, who meet you and greet you with a gentle cordiality.

Like many other visitors, I had made the mistake of having planned to stay there only a couple of months instead of a couple of years; and the date of parting came too soon. For Honolulu is a heartbreaking place to sail away from. A day before you go, your friends, both *haole* and Polynesian, hang your neck with *leis*, so that you go about caparisoned with tokens of departure and all eyes are turned upon you with regret. When, at last, you board your steamer, you find your stateroom filled with flowers and the berths banked high with farewell tokens from white folk and yellow folk and brown. You wander out upon the deck, whence native boys dive downward into the distant sea, their purple bodies curving through the crystal air. Over the side, you hurl streamers of multicoloured paper, which are caught by your friends upon the dock below. Among them stands Achilles, with a wistful look in eyes focussed far away. Then, the white-uniformed Hawaiian band, magnificent and royal, strikes up the eloquent music of *Aloha Oe.* The steamer backs and turns. The narrow strips of multicoloured paper snap in twain. The Hawaiian hymn still chants its heart-rending measure of farewell. Over the rail you lean, as Honolulu hides itself in vegetation and you skirt the foaming coral reef of Waikiki. And then, before the ship rounds Diamond Head, you drop your *leis* into the sea, so that they may drift backward with the tide and carry your heart ashore again. And ever afterward, wherever you may be, there will come moments when you do not see what is before

you, nor hear what is being said to you, because your eyes are focussed half the world away and your ears are hearkening to the distant music of that unforgettable Hawaiian hymn. And, in those moments, your soul will turn homeward to the Happy Isles, like the flowers that you strewed upon the sea.

THE END

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